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—"he was beset with women and children." p. 215.

WASHINGTON AND SEVENTY-SIX.

BY

LUCY E. AND CLARA F. GUERNSEY.

There shall be a handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon.—PSALM lxxii. 16.

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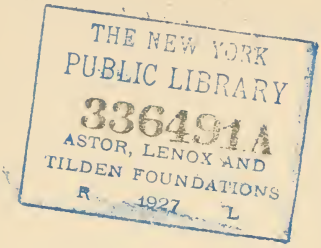
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Marquand 14 Oct. 1927

PREFACE.

THE authors' first intention was to make this book a complete life of Washington. It was, however, found impossible to execute such a plan in a limited space without making the book a mere dry compendium of dates and events. They preferred, therefore, only to carry the story of the Republic and her great leader through the year 1776. Should the book be so fortunate as to interest those for whom it is written, it may be followed by other volumes. The story of our Revolutionary War is a history of endurance rather than of brilliant achievements and great successes. In reading the tale, especially as it is told by British historians, it seems as if the American cause had been saved almost as by a series of miracles, preserved in weakness, poverty, disunited councils, almost every possible misfortune, as if especially that this Nation might know that "the Lord, he is God," and that "there is none else beside Him."

Would that in this year, when we count up our gains and losses, the Nation, unlike the Pagan chief

who of old "made his own right hand his god," might say, with humble and steadfast heart, "And now, behold I have brought the first-fruits of the land, which thou, O Lord, hast given me."

L. E. G.
C. F. G.

WASHINGTON AND SEVENTY-SIX.

CHAPTER I.

THE EARLY LIFE OF WASHINGTON.

IN the year 1732 a quiet country gentleman was living at Bridges Creek, Westmoreland county, Virginia.

His grandfather had emigrated from England in 1657. The house in which he lived was a plain farm-house, with a high roof, sloping into low eaves, which probably formed a sort of rude verandah. At each end was an immense stone chimney. There were four rooms below and some chambers above. The house was a comfortable one for the time and place, and commanded a fine view of the Potomac River and the Maryland shore. The name of its owner was Augustine Washington.

On the 22d of February, 1732, a son was born to Mr. Washington, who was then living with his second wife, and the boy was named George. Let us see into what kind of a world this same baby boy came. It was in many respects very different from the world in

which we are living to-day. There was not a railroad nor a steamboat in existence, nor steam power of any kind. Electricity had been known and experimented upon to some extent, but nobody thought of using it or governing it. If some one had told the very wisest philosopher of that day, then busy with his silk rubbers and his glass jars, that the power which he was studying would some time be used to send messages under the ocean from one part of the globe to another, and that in less time than he would require to write five lines, he would have thought the prophet a madman.

In England, and in some parts of Europe, post coaches were used on the great roads, attaining in some cases to twelve miles an hour—a rate of travel which some old people thought dangerously rapid. A still greater speed was reached by those who travelled "post," as it was called, that is, by relays of horses, which were frequently changed. In America, most people travelled on horseback, and ladies made long journeys in this way, riding alone, or with a friend or servant, who was usually well armed, for the roads were not always safe.

In England, George the Second was king. He was a brave general, rather too fond of fighting, but a tolerable king, as kings went in those days. He had a great deal to contend with at home, for the people were not fond of him, and there was a large party still strongly attached to the exiled family of the Stuarts. There had been a rising in favor of the Stuarts in 1715, and there were signs of another, which, however,

did not take place for some years—not till 1745. The people, on the whole, were perhaps as well off as they are now. There were very few manufactures. The common people wore homespun woollen and linen clothes, and ladies of rank did not disdain to spin fine linen thread, to be woven into cloth for household uses and handsome table linen.

The state of manners in country places would now be thought rude and barbarous. Cock-fighting and bull-baiting were common amusements. The poor bull, after being paraded round the town dressed in ribbons and finery, was then hunted about the streets by savage dogs, and more savage men, till he was just ready to drop, when he was at last killed by the butchers, who gave the entertainment.* It was not the rabble alone who joined in these brutal amusements. They were approved and encouraged by the higher classes, on the ground that they served to make people hardy and manly. There were no Sunday-schools, and the education of the lower classes was greatly neglected. When, some years afterwards, Mrs. Hannah More began to bestir herself to set up schools for the training of the daughters of laborers and farm hands, she found it necessary to assure some of her friends who were alarmed at the dangerous innovation that she had no intention of teaching these young persons *to write!*

As I have said, the principal method of fast travel-

* To a much later period than this bull-baiting continued in favor. Mary Howitt says it was practised in her childhood. Its abolition was stoutly opposed as a piece of foolish sentimentalism.

ling was by coach and by post, and these were not always very safe, from the fact that all the great roads, especially those leading from London to York and Exeter, were infested by highwaymen. These "gentlemen of the road," as they were often called, were mounted on fine horses and wore fine clothes. They relieved gentlemen of their money and watches, and ladies of their jewels, in the politest manner, but seldom shed blood unless when resisted. They usually went masked, and it was believed often mingled in the best society—dancing with a lady in the evening and taking possession of her rings and trinkets next morning. Nevertheless, in the eye of law, as in that of the gospel, these gentlemen robbers were but common thieves, and when taken, were hung with as little ceremony as the man who had forged a one pound note or the poor servant maid who had stolen ten shillings worth of lace from her mistress. It seems incredible at this day that the law should have held human life so cheap; but it is a fact that, at a much later time, men, women, and even young boys and girls, were hung at Tyburn for stealing smaller sums than ten shillings.

In France, Louis the Fifteenth was wearing out the remainder of his shameful and useless life, horribly afraid of dying, and compromising with his conscience and his confessors for his open and scandalous wickedness by persecuting Protestants, quartering dragoons upon them to oppress them with every sort of exaction and cruelty, and sending pastors to the galleys, where they were kept chained night and day to the vilest malefactors, and commissioning soldiers to fire volley after

volley into closely-packed congregations of men, women and children who had committed the crime of meeting in desert places to worship God according to their own consciences. In the tower of Constancy, well named, were women who had been imprisoned ten, twenty, and thirty years for the crime of being Protestants and reading the Bible in their own tongue.*

Any Catholic was at liberty to kidnap a Protestant child from its parents and carry it to a nunnery or monastery, that it might be brought up in the Roman Catholic faith.

The court revelled in every imaginable luxury, while the people starved, or lived on scant allowance of the poorest food, resorting in times of scarcity to boiled grass and nettles.

Any great lord might send a peasant to the galleys for keeping pigeons, for killing one of his rabbits that were destroying his poor garden, or for marrying his daughter without asking his lord's consent.†

* Much interest was felt for these women, and not only Protestants and foreigners had used their influence to obtain their release, but the population of Aigues Morts and many Roman Catholics had done what they could to procure their freedom, but the government and the church were inexorable.

It is pleasant to know that the Franciscan monks who had been sent to convert them, finding all such attempts useless, continued their visits in order to secretly bring them clothes, linen, food, news from their friends, and to give them such Christian consolation as all real disciples of Christ may give each other, whatever their names. It is not the only instance in which the gray robes of the Franciscan have covered hearts kinder than the decrees of the church.

† The reader will find a graphic picture of the state of the people in Miss Martineau's "Peasant and Prince."

Education was in the hands of the priests, who taught the people the rosary and a few prayers, while Voltaire and the philosophers were doing their best to destroy the Christian religion altogether. From the highest to the lowest, superstitions, both new and old, were rife, and fortune-tellers, pretended sorcerers, made a rich harvest out of the foolish and credulous, both ignorant and learned. It was no wonder that in the next reign the flood of the Revolution came and took them all away.

Let us cast a look at America. We must remember that there were no United States at that time. There were seven English colonies, more or less, closely united by neighborhood and common interests. These were, Virginia, New York, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Delaware, New Jersey and Maine.

Virginia, the oldest, had been the most unfortunate in its first start, but was now holding its own with its neighbors, and making a great deal of money from the growth and sale of tobacco. The people were a good deal scattered on farms and plantations, and there were no large cities. All west of the Alleghany mountains was a wilderness, and settlers were slowly creeping toward the base of the Blue Ridge. These settlers were in constant danger of attack and massacre from the Indians, whose natural ferocity was constantly stirred up by French agents sent among them from Canada. In New York there were but few settlements north or west of Albany, though some scattered families had ventured into the Mohawk Valley, led by the beauty and richness of the country to dare the peril

of dangerous neighbors, for all central and western New York was held by the Six Nations, the most warlike and civilized of all the Indian tribes—the only race among them who showed talent for organization.

New York city, formerly called New Amsterdam, had been originally a Dutch settlement, but had been surrendered to the English in 1669, when its name was changed, in compliment to the Duke of York. It was considered a promising place, in view of its fine situation at the mouth of the Hudson, but could not as yet compare with Boston in size, wealth or commerce. Albany was a small and pretty country village, with one wide street, lined with substantial gable-ended, "crow stepped," mansions, built of brick brought from Holland, and owned by the descendants of the first Dutch settlers.

Massachusetts was the oldest and by far the most important of the New England States. Boston was a large and flourishing city, whose inhabitants emulated the luxury and ceremony of the mother country. Both ladies and gentlemen, dressed in rich silks and satins, put their servants into fine liveries, drove in handsome coaches with four horses, and gave grand entertainments. They were not greatly in favor with the home government, on account of their inflexible spirit of independence, and they were often engaged in a quarrel with their governor on a question of salary. It was not that they grudged their money, on the contrary, they were disposed to be very liberal, but they chose to pay in their own way, and generally to arrange their

affairs according to their own ideas, without much reference to England.

Education was in a prosperous condition. The college at Cambridge had a good number both of teachers and professors, and both common and select schools abounded through the country. Young ladies belonging to rich families learned French and music as they do now. There were no pianos, and even the harpsichord had not come into general use. The instrument most in favor was the spinet, which was to a modern piano what a small melodeon is to one of the best organs. Ladies did a great deal of embroidery of all sorts, working most wonderful landscapes and flower pieces, and "sprigging" gowns and aprons without end. The boys went to school in winter, and those in the country worked in summer. Those who wished to learn trades were bound out or apprenticed to tradesmen, who were responsible for their support, and also for giving them a certain amount of education.

Now and then an enterprising young man "went West," into the wilds of what is now Vermont, or the still more dangerous Mohawk Valley. In general the people were much on a level—some few very rich, and still fewer very poor.

They raised their own flax and wool and made their own cloth; buying now and then a suit of English broadcloth, or brocade, or an India chintz, for grand occasions.

A few slaves were held, principally for household services, but the slavery was of a very easy kind, for the most part. On the whole, the people of New Eng-

land were perhaps as well off as they have ever been since, and except for some trouble arising from the currency, and for one fear, which always hung like a dark cloud in the background—the fear of Indian invasion and massacre. True, all the Indians within the boundaries of New England had been thoroughly subjugated; but Canada swarmed with savages, all more or less under French influence, and ready, in case of any difficulty between England and France, to fall upon the outlying New England settlements and earn the favor of their spiritual guides, the Jesuits, by bringing home a string of heretic scalps.

Of the other colonies, Pennsylvania was the largest and most prosperous. It had been settled by the Friends—or Quakers, as they were called—under the leadership of the celebrated William Penn. Philadelphia, the principal city, was growing in size and importance, and the older Friends already began to complain of increasing luxury and ostentation.

Delaware, which had at first been included in Penn's grant, had now a separate Assembly, though it was under the same governor. The northern and western parts of the present State were still covered with woods and inhabited by bands of roving Indians.

The Carolinas had met with many troubles in their first settlement, both from internal dissensions and Indian wars. In one of these struggles, the warlike nation of the Tuscaroras were driven out of their native land, and coming North, joined the confederacy of the Five Nations, but at the time we are considering, these colonies were quiet and prospering.

CHAPTER II.

WASHINGTON'S BOYHOOD.

GEORGE WASHINGTON was one of a large family. He had two older brothers, Lawrence and Augustine, and three younger, Samuel, John and Charles; two sisters, Elizabeth, commonly called Betsy, and a baby named Mildred, who died in infancy. George seems to have been most attached to his two half brothers, Lawrence and Augustine. Lawrence, the eldest, was sent to England to complete his education. George's first school learning was gained in a country district school, kept by a man named Hobby, who was also sexton of the church.. We are not informed of the good man's qualifications, but it is not at all probable he could pass an examination for a regent's certificate in these days. Nevertheless he kept his school to the satisfaction of his employers, and taught the boys of Bridges Creek to read, write and cipher. George, however, was not dependent upon Sexton Hobby for the best part of his education. His parents seem to have been people of a good degree of cultivation, and still better, of the soundest moral principle.

George learned very early the grand principles of education as laid down by the ancient Persians, to

ride, to shoot and to speak the truth. He was from the first instructed in the true religion, and taught to study the Scriptures.

When George was seven or eight years old, his oldest brother, Lawrence, returned from England. He was fourteen years older than George, highly educated, and of a manly and adventurous turn of mind. George at once conceived a great admiration and affection for his "big brother," who seems to have returned the little fellow's devotion by a very warm and judicious regard. The bond between them continued to be peculiarly close and warm as long as the elder brother lived.

When Lawrence was about twenty-two, trouble broke out between the English and French on one side and the Spaniards on the other. The Spaniards committed some depredations on English merchant ships and stations. Admiral Vernon took the fort of Porto Bello, on the Isthmus of Darien. A call was made upon the English colonies in America for four regiments, which were promptly raised. Lawrence Washington, among others, partook of the military spirit. He obtained a captain's commission in one of the regiments, and, under Admiral Vernon, was present at the disastrous siege of Carthagena, where his regiment distinguished itself for its bravery.

Of course the boys in the Washington neighborhood caught the military spirit. Mr. Hobby's school boys were formed into companies, and went through the usual routine of drill and sham fights. In all these martial amusements, George Washington was the

acknowledged leader of the school, though he sometimes found a rival in a boy named William Hobby.

The father of George Washington died suddenly on the 12th of April, 1743, when only forty-nine years old. George was absent when his father was taken ill, and returned in time only to see him die.

Mr. Washington divided his very considerable property among his children by will, leaving to Lawrence the estate on the Potomac, and to George the house and land on the Rappahannock.

Lawrence married the daughter of the Hon. William Fairfax, and settled on his estate, which he called Mount Vernon, in honor of his late commander. George, with the other younger children, was left under the guardianship of his mother, who, till they should come of age, had also the care of the property.

Mrs. Washington seems to have been eminently fitted for her position. She was a woman of naturally high temper and determined spirit, both of which were thoroughly under control, with an aptitude for business and a capacity for commanding respect as well as affection. She governed her children strictly but kindly, exacting from them not only implicit obedience, but also the outward forms of respect. Under her influence George laid the foundation of those courteous and somewhat ceremonious manners that afterward proved so useful to him.

Mrs. Washington was in the daily habit of collecting her children about her, and reading to them from some serious standard book. One of her great favorites was "Sir Matthew Hale's Contemplations Moral

and Divine," and her copy of this book, with her name, is still preserved among the treasures at Mount Vernon. How many of our Sunday-school boys and girls, who will have nothing but a story book, and contemptuously reject the most interesting history or biography, would be content to listen for an hour or two every day to such a book as "Matthew Hale's Contemplations," and how many mothers are there, who take pains to direct their children into good habits and tastes with regard to reading?

Not very long after his father's death, George was sent to reside with Augustine Washington, to enjoy the advantages of a better school than Sexton Hobby's. This school was kept by a Mr. Williams, who seems to have been a superior sort of man. Here George perfected himself in the ordinary studies, and learned something of the higher mathematics, particularly surveying. In those days arithmetical text books were not used in the schools as they are at present. The teachers gave out the rule and "set the sums" on the slate. The pupils worked out the sums and set down the rule, and when both had been corrected by the master, they were carefully copied into a "ciphering book."

A good many of George's "ciphering books" are still preserved at Mount Vernon, and are quite patterns of neatness and accuracy, though one of them has certain rude profiles, perhaps of his schoolmates, and some long-tailed birds flourishing over the figures. George also copied into a book a great variety of mercantile and legal papers, bills of lading, deeds, notes,

and the like. All his life he was remarkable for his carefulness in business matters, and his account books, both public and private, are noted for their systematic accuracy.

It must not be supposed that George was wanting in the spirit proper to his age. On the contrary, he was fond of all sorts of play, especially such as involved strength and dexterity. He excelled in running, wrestling, pitching quoits and climbing, and is said to have been remarkably dexterous in throwing stones. A place is still shown at Fredericksburg where he threw a stone across the Rappahannock. He was also an excellent shot, and very fond of riding horses of which other people were afraid.

This propensity led him into the most serious scrape of his boyhood of which we have any account.

His mother had a fine sorrel colt, valuable for its beauty and high blood, but so spirited and vicious that no one had been able to break him. George, however, determined to make the attempt. One morning early, having secured the assistance of several of his schoolmates, he drove the colt into a corner of the field, and succeeded in springing upon his back. The sorrel plunged and reared, and tried all his powers to unseat his rider, but in vain. The contest soon became alarming to the lookers-on. George's naturally high and imperious temper was roused. He was determined to conquer, and the sorrel was equally resolved not to be overcome. At last, in the midst of a furious struggle, the colt broke a blood vessel and dropped dead.

We can imagine the grief of the boys when they saw

Taming the Colt. p. 22.

the beautiful willful creature, lately so full of life, lying dead before them. It must have been peculiarly distressing to George, not only because he was the one most in fault, but because he was unusually tender-hearted, and also because he knew the grief his mother would feel at the loss of her pet.

"Who was to tell Mrs. Washington?" was the question, and, in the midst of their consultation, they were interrupted by a call to breakfast. The breakfast was doubtless an excellent one, but I question whether the boys were able to do justice to the fried chicken, corn cake and other dainties, which probably formed part of the meal. Presently came the dreaded question,

"Well, young gentlemen, have you seen my sorrel colt in your rambles?"

There was a pause, and then George answered:

"Your sorrel colt is dead, mother."

She asked what killed him. George gave a short and true account of the matter. Mrs. Washington no doubt thought that the grief of the boy was punishment enough for what was, after all, an accident. She was silent for a moment, and then answered gently:

"While I am very sorry for the death of my colt, I rejoice in my son, who always speaks the truth."

The example of his mother, in governing her naturally vehement temper, was not lost upon Washington. He early became remarkable for his strict self-control and his high sense of justice. We are told that he was a sort of umpire in the school, appealed to in all disputes, and usually giving satisfaction by his decisions. To use the words of Mr. Irving: "As he had formerly

been military chieftain, he was now legislator of the school, thus displaying in boyhood the type of the future man."

At Mount Vernon, George was introduced to the best society the country afforded, and his natural disposition profited by the opportunities he enjoyed.

Lawrence Washington had married the daughter of the Hon. William Fairfax, an English gentleman, who, after serving with credit in the English army, and assisting in clearing out the nest of pirates at New Providence, was made governor of that island. He had now resided some years in Virginia, employed in the care of the estates of his cousin, Lord Fairfax. Mr. Fairfax was a gentleman in the best sense of that much-abused word. He was greatly interested in George, and frequently invited him to his house. Mr. Fairfax lived at Belvoir, a beautiful place on the banks of the Potomac. He had a large family of sons and daughters, and entertained a great deal of company. It was about this time that George compiled his code of rules for the formation of morals and manners. While we smile at the formality of some of them, as applied to himself by a lad of fourteen, we must admit that a better code of rules could hardly be desired.*

Influences were brought to bear on George in the house of Mr. Fairfax which came near to altering not only his own destiny, but that of a great many other people.

It was no uncommon thing for an English ship of war to drop her anchor in the Potomac for a few days

* See the Appendix to this volume.

or weeks, in which case the officers were always hospitably entertained at Belvoir. Mr. Fairfax and Colonel Washington often met among these officers their old companions in arms, in which case they would spend hours in recounting their former exploits. We can imagine George sitting silent and attentive, while the old soldiers and sailors talked of the capture of Porto Bello and the repulse from Carthagena, of desperate encounters with West India pirates, of storms and shipwreck and yellow fever. Sailors are proverbially good-natured, and the officers of the Terror or of the Thunder, as the case might be, would naturally be interested in their young auditor, and he was probably often invited on shipboard. Under these circumstances, it is no wonder that George should conceive a strong desire to go to sea. There seemed no reasonable objection. The profession was an honorable one. The boy was of a suitable age and disposition. A midshipman's warrant was obtained for him, and it is said that his trunk was actually on board a ship of war, lying in the Potomac, when the mother's heart failed her. George was the oldest and the most promising of her children. She could not bear the thought of giving him up, and for once her feelings overcame her. She made an earnest remonstrance. George yielded, gave up his warrant, and quietly returned to school at Bridges Creek.

No doubt the disappointment was a great one, but it was borne with a good grace. George went to work harder than ever, studying mathematics, and especially laboring to perfect himself as a practical surveyor.

The profession of surveying, which is one of the most useful in a new country, requires not only that the person who attempts it should study, but also that he should put his knowledge into practice as he goes on. "It is by speaking French that one learns to speak it," said an admirable teacher of that language; and it is only by surveying that one learns to survey. In this way George Washington learned his profession. He made careful surveys of all the fields and farms in his neighborhood, entering the results in his "field books." Many of these books still exist, "and," says Mr. Irving, "are as neat and exact as if the whole related to real transactions, instead of being mere school exercises." In his early years, Washington had already acquired that habit of exactness and care which made him so fit for the great place he filled in after life.

Washington, however, had his own troubles at this time. From his own handwriting, we have evidence that he had conceived an affection for some young lady who did not at all return the feeling. She very likely regarded him as the boy that he was.

An old lady, who knew him well in his youth, said that he was "a very bashful young man," and that she "often wished he would talk more."

This early romance of Washington seems to have lasted longer than the usual fancies of fifteen, and while it did last, it made him seriously unhappy. It does not appear that he ever made his feelings known to the lady, but, after the custom of lovers of those days and later days, he wrote verses, and very bad verses they were, which still remain in the waste pages of his

early journals, to prove that the sedate and dignified Washington had a vein of romance in his nature.

This fancy, however, did not interfere with his work. When he left school, at the age of sixteen, he was already capable of taking charge of a surveying party, and running out lines through the wildest country. He had also acquired a character for steadiness, hardihood, uprightness and good breeding.

His frame, always strong and robust, had been hardened and strengthened by manly exercises. He could ride with the boldest, shoot, and handle a boat. His bare word was respected by every one. At sixteen he was a man.

CHAPTER III.

ENTRY INTO PUBLIC LIFE.

AMONG other friends whom Washington had made during his visit to Mount Vernon was Lord Fairfax, the cousin of William Fairfax, and owner of the immense estate to which William was agent. The habits of Lord Fairfax were somewhat eccentric, but he was a good and kind-hearted man. An early disappointment of a very cruel and bitter kind had broken up a career which promised to be both useful and brilliant, and had made him shy and averse to general society. He had been engaged to a young lady of rank, the wedding day was actually fixed, and the dresses prepared, when suddenly the lady broke her promise and married for a ducal coronet. Lord Fairfax withdrew almost entirely from society, and after making a voyage to Virginia, in 1739, resolved to settle there permanently.

He inherited from his mother vast landed estates lying between the Potomac and Rappahannock, and running back so as to take in a large part of the beautiful and fertile Shenandoah Valley. A great part of this domain was unknown wilderness, but settlers had already been attracted by the mild climate and the fertility of the soil.

The attention of the old nobleman, accustomed to judge of men, was soon arrested by young Washington. He himself was exceedingly fond of field sports, especially fox-hunting, for which the region about Belvoir afforded an excellent opportunity. He soon began to make George his companion in his hunting excursions, and taught him to be as fond of the sport as he was himself.

Washington found himself in very pleasant society, as the son of William Fairfax had recently brought home a bride, and with the bride her sister, Miss Carey, whom Washington admired greatly, but who reminded him of his "lowland beauty," as he calls the object of his early passion. Though in his letters to two young friends, whom he calls Robin and Sallie, he still speaks of his "melancholy," it is evident that, what with the society of the young ladies and with fox-hunting Lord Fairfax, the young gentleman was having what a modern youth would call "a very good time."

Lord Fairfax learned to know and to esteem his young friend, and at last reposed in him an important trust for one so young. As I have said, the lands of Lord Fairfax were beginning to attract the notice of emigrants, and squatters, as they were called, were taking possession of the best tracts and most promising situations.

It was necessary that the lands should be explored and surveyed by some trusty and skillful person, and Lord Fairfax pitched upon George Washington. The proposition was too much after the young man's own

heart not to be eagerly accepted, and in a few days the young surveyor, accompanied by Mr. George William Fairfax, set out for the wilderness. It would be interesting, if our limits permitted, to follow the steps of the youthful explorer through his expedition. At that time he was just sixteen. There are ample materials for doing so, as Washington was accustomed to keep a minute journal—a very desirable habit, by the way. He tells us how he and his companions forded rivers, camped out in the wilderness, or shared the shelter of some settler's hut, "lying on the floor," as he tells us, with man, wife and children, like dogs and cats, "and happy he who had the berth next the fire."

On one occasion, being detained by the swollen waters of the Potomac, they whiled away the time by an excursion to the Warm Springs, since known as the Berkely Springs. At another time, while they were detained by stress of weather at the house of Colonel Cresap, a noted woodsman and Indian fighter, they had a visit from a war party of thirty Indians, who had a fresh scalp in their possession. These warriors were in high good humor over their horrid prize, and treated their entertainers to a scalp dance in the most approved style—an exhibition which seems to have been new to Washington, who carefully noted down all the particulars in his journal. The surveying party was followed by numbers of people, mostly German emigrants, desirous of buying land. Washington says they were unable to speak any language but their own, but were very merry and courageous. A good many of them afterwards fell victims

to the Indian raids which took place some time later, but the descendants of others are living in the Shenandoah valley to this day.

Having completed his surveys, after a month's absence, Washington returned to Mount Vernon. By reference to his books, we find that he received from seven to ten dollars a day. Lord Fairfax was well pleased with the way in which his young friend had acquitted himself, and used his influence to have him appointed public surveyor, which office he held for three years.

Many of his surveys still remain recorded in the county offices, and are considered as the highest authority wherever they are found. During his surveys and explorations he was frequently a visitor at Greenway Court, a house which Lord Fairfax owned, about twelve miles from the present town of Winchester. Lord Fairfax intended to build a fine manor house upon this site, but the intention was never carried out, and he resided till his death in the rough stone house in which his agent had lived; here he had his horses and hounds, his black servants and other retainers, and here he kept open house for all comers. The house was standing, but in a ruinous condition, when Mr. Irving visited it some years ago.

Meanwhile a new field was opening for the exercise of Washington's talents.

In 1673 Father Marquette, with his companion, Father Joliet, both Jesuit missionaries, had travelled down the Mississippi as far as the Arkansas. They were probably the first white persons who had done so,

and on that account were said to gain for the French king, by rights of discovery, not only the Mississippi, but all the rivers running into it. The Ohio, with all its branches, was one of these rivers, and thus the French king's claim covered a large portion of what is now the United States.

The English, on their part, were in nowise disposed to submit to these claims. They opposed to the French a counter claim founded on a treaty made with the Indians in 1741, at Lancaster, whereby the latter gave up all right and title to all lands from the Alleghany mountains to the Mississippi river. It was no great gift, seeing that they did not own a single foot of the ground at the time, but according to their traditions, their ancestors had conquered it in times past; therefore they asserted it was still their rightful property. One claim was, in point of fact, quite as reasonable (or as unreasonable) as the other, but neither side had as yet made any important step toward taking possession of the land in question. The vast tract was roamed over by bands of Indians, mostly offshoots from the great Iroquois Nation, and therefore as brave and fierce as any on the continent. Now and then a Jesuit missionary would try to make converts among them, generally with very indifferent success. The French professed to hold the Indians under their protection, and the Indians were disposed to be friendly toward their protectors, and did not take the scalps of their spiritual fathers unless it was very hard to come by those of other people.

Another sort of missionaries were more highly

appreciated by the Indians. These were the Indian traders, mostly from Pennsylvania, who came among them with pack-horses laden with knives and other hardware, beads, finery, sugar, tobacco and rum, which were exchanged for furs and skins. These traders were welcome to the Indians, who depended upon them for their supplies of guns and ammunition. The appearance of the traders was the signal for general festivity, usually concluding with a grand drinking bout. When his goods were all disposed of, the trader took his way homeward laden with valuable furs, which he sold, at a great profit, in Philadelphia.

In 1749 an association was formed called the "Ohio Company," to which was granted five hundred thousand acres of land between the Monongahela and Kanawha rivers. The company were to pay no rent for seven years, but they were under bonds to settle one hundred families upon them within that time, and to build a fort for protection against the Indians. The grant was obtained by Mr. John Hanbury, a wealthy merchant of London. Mr. Thomas Lee, president of the council of Virginia, and Lawrence and Augustine Washington, were among the leading members of the association. Goods were brought out from London for the purpose of trading with the Indians, presents were made to the great chiefs, and everything seemed to be in a prosperous train.

The French, however, were not inclined to give up their claim. They also sent their agent among the Indians, who distributed presents in his turn, made speeches, and warned off the Pennsylvania traders.

He also nailed to the trees and buried in the ground leaden plates bearing inscriptions to the purport that all lands in that neighborhood belonged to the King of France. "The Indians," says Mr. Irving, "gazed at these plates with wondering eyes, but surmised their purport;" and he might have added that most of these same leaden plates were doubtless converted into bullets and trinkets as soon as the Frenchman's back was turned.

After much diplomacy on both sides, after emissaries had been sent to the Indians from both French and English, after numberless speeches made and belts of wampum exchanged, the English determined to persevere, and sent Mr. Gist, an old pioneer, and much accustomed to dealing with the Indians, to survey the lands of the Ohio Company on the south side of the Ohio. While he was thus engaged, an old Delaware Indian asked him a very pertinent question:

"The French," he said, "claim all the land on the one side of the Ohio, and the English claim all on the other side. Now, where does the Indians' land lie?"

We are not informed how the old surveyor answered this riddle, but he went on with his survey all the same.

Meantime the French began to make hostile preparations. They built an armed vessel on the lakes, fortified their trading posts already existing, and established others. The colonies on their part were not backward. They raised companies, provided ammunition of all sorts, and prepared to defend their claims. Lawrence Washington sought and obtained for his brother the place of adjutant-general.

The young officer had command of a military district, with the title of major, and his business was to attend to the raising and discipline of militia companies. Washington at once set himself to work to learn the duties of his new position. He studied military tactics, apparently with the same sober earnestness with which he had applied himself to surveying, and took lessons in the sword exercise of one Captain Jacob Van Braam, a Dutchman.

But his military duties met with a sad interruption. His brother Lawrence, always delicate in constitution, showed decided symptoms of consumption. George at once abandoned everything else and devoted himself to the care of Lawrence. The two brothers went to Barbadoes, where George seems to have been chiefly struck by the beauty of the trees, the amazing variety of the fruits, and the astonishingly bad management of the planters, who, with the most productive estates in the world, kept themselves constantly in debt and embarrassment by their extravagance. Lawrence spent the winter in Barbadoes, but did not receive the benefit which his friends had hoped. In the spring he sailed to Bermuda, but all was in vain. He grew rapidly worse, and came home in July only in time to die. He seems to have been a most admirable man, and his death at the early age of thirty-four was universally lamented. He left a wife and one infant daughter. In case of the child's death, the estate of Mount Vernon was to belong to the widow for her life, and then to descend to George, who was appointed one of the executors of the will. George was very young for

such a trust; but he fulfilled it to the satisfaction of every one, and soon had the whole business of the estate on his hands.

Meantime the disputes with the French still continued. The Indians, upon the whole, were disposed to resent the aggressions of the French and to side with the English; but, as usual, they were divided among themselves. A portion of them favored the French. It was reported that the latter were ascending the Mississippi, and that they meant to establish a chain of forts from Louisiana to Canada. The Ohio Company complained loudly to Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia, who was himself one of the stockholders. It was decided to send an envoy to the French commander on the Ohio to represent these aggressions, and Captain William Grant was selected for that purpose. He does not seem to have been very well fitted for the business which he undertook, for finding that the French had gained some advantages, and that matters upon the frontier looked decidedly threatening, he abandoned the expedition and hastily returned home.

Governor Dinwiddie now looked about him for another messenger, and this time his choice fell upon George Washington.

The choice was approved by all concerned. George Washington was only twenty-two years of age; but he had already acquired a character for steadiness and bravery. He was used to woodcraft; he was well acquainted with the matter in dispute, and his temper and habits of mind were admirably suited to dealing with the Indians.

He was directed to repair to Logstown, one of the principal Indian settlements, and there to put himself in communication with those chiefs who were favorable to the English, to obtain an escort from them to the French commander, deliver his letters, and return home as quickly as possible.

Did our space permit, it would be interesting to follow Washington through all his adventures.* Washington set out on the 30th of October, 1753. At Wills' Creek he met by appointment with Mr. Gist, the old surveyor and pioneer. His other companions were Captain Van Braam, an Indian interpreter, named John Davison, and four experienced frontiersmen. They went down to the confluence of the Alleghany and Monongahela, where the town of Pittsburgh now stands. Washington at once perceived the advantages of the situation as a military post, and the French engineers afterwards confirmed his opinion by building upon that spot a fortress which they called Fort Duquesne.

In this neighborhood lived the chief sachem of the Delawares, whom Washington visited, and invited him to attend the council at Logstown, where the chief known as the Half King resided, with several other distinguished warriors.

After some days of delay and diplomacy, the chiefs were assembled, and at last it was agreed that the

* Those who wish to obtain a fuller account of this period of Washington's life will find many particulars in Irving's biography, Marshall's Washington, and in his own papers edited by Sparks.

alliances and treaties made with the French should be cancelled, and that three of the chiefs, including the Half King, should accompany Washington on his mission to the French commandant.

On the 30th of November, Washington, with his Indian escort, set out for Venango. There he met Captain Joncaire, who called himself the commandant, on the Ohio; but being told of the nature of the business, he informed Washington that there was a general officer stationed at the next fort, and advised him to carry his letter thither.

Captain Joncaire entertained the party hospitably—too hospitably for his own good. It is no uncommon thing for a man who digs a pit for his neighbor to fall into it himself, and so it proved with Captain Joncaire. In attempting to make his guests tipsy he became very much so himself, and let out a good deal which he did not mean to tell. Washington took careful note of all that fell from his host.

The Indians, however, fell into the snare, and were made frantically drunk, and it was with difficulty that Washington got them away from the dangerous neighborhood.

They set out at last, accompanied by a French commissary named La Force, and after four days of hard travel the party reached the fort at French Creek. Here they were received with great civility, but obtained very little satisfaction. They were detained a number of days, during which time Washington satisfied himself that nothing was to be expected but treachery and hostility. Every influence was used to

detach the Indian chiefs from the English envoy, but the influence of Washington prevailed.

At last, on the 16th of December, Washington received an answer to the Governor's letter and started for home. The journey was a severe one; the snow was deep, the streams swollen and the weather very cold. The poor horses travelled more and more slowly, and at last Washington, weary with his delay, resolved to proceed on foot. He accordingly put Captain Van Braam in command of the party, while he and Mr. Gist strapped their packs on their backs and set out to walk home through the wilderness.

The next day they reached a place with the sinister name of "Murdering-town," the scene probably of some now forgotten tragedy. From here Washington intended to strike through the woods to Shannopin's-town, two or three miles above the forks of the Ohio. There he hoped to be able to cross the Alleghany River on the ice.

At Murdering-town, however, was a party of Indians, who seemed to have been waiting there to meet the travellers. One of them expressed himself much delighted at meeting Mr. Gist. The old woodsman thought he had seen the man with Joncaire. He knew that if such was the case the party must be in the French interest, and he suspected an ambush. The Indian asked a great many questions: "When did they leave Venango, where had they left their horses, and when was the rest of the party coming?" All these questions made Gist the more suspicious, and he was very reserved in his answers.

The travellers knew nothing of the route to Shannopin's-town, only that it lay through the deep woods. After some consultation, however, they resolved to run the risk of taking one of the Indians for a guide. The man was very willing to go, and was so obliging as to carry Washington's pack. After a brisk walk of eight or ten miles, Washington, who had undergone great fatigue the day before, proposed to stop and light a fire. The guide, however, objected, but offered if Washington were so weary to carry his gun; but Washington was too old a woodsman to part with his weapon.

The Indian declared that there were Ottawas in the woods, and that it would be dangerous to light a fire, as it would be likely to discover them to the Ottawas, by whom they might be surprised and scalped. He urged them to come to his own cabin a little farther on, where they would be safe.

They followed him for some distance, when the guide, after listening for a moment, declared that he heard the report of a gun in the direction of his cabin, and turned his steps more to the northward. Washington thought he was being led into an ambuscade, and both he and Gist were upon their guard.

The Indian still kept on to the north, saying that he had heard two whoops, signals from his cabin, and that now they had but a little farther to go.

At length they came to an opening in the woods, and coming out from the shadow of the trees, found themselves in an open meadow, where the full light fell upon the snow.

On the instant the guide, who was about fifteen paces in front, turned and fired at Washington; but the bullet missed its mark, and neither Washington nor Gist were wounded.

The Indian, after firing, took refuge behind a large white oak to reload; but before he could fire again he was seized by Washington and Gist. Gist would have put the guide to death on the spot, but Washington overruled him.

They allowed him to finish loading his gun, but took the weapon from him, and obliged him to make the camp fire, while the two white men kept watch over the guns. Gist, who probably did not think the life of an Indian of any great consequence, thought that the safer course would be to kill him then and there; but giving way to the scruples of his young commander, he observed that if the man was not to be killed they must manage to send him off, and then leave the neighborhood with all speed. He entered into conversation with the Indian, and pretended to think that the firing of the gun had been merely a signal to his cabin, and that it was out of the question that he had had any evil intentions.

The guide, although he could not have thought that the old woodsman had been so blind as he pretended, was equally polite and diplomatic, and at once endorsed Gist's opinion that the gun levelled at Washington's head had been a harmless warning to his own squaw. He said that he now knew the way to his cabin, which was near by.

Gist told him that he might go home then, but that

as he and Washington were tired, they would stay where they were and follow him in the morning, and that he must have some meat ready. He then gave the guide a cake of bread, and the Indian went away probably even more surprised than Gist at the scruples of the young gentleman from Virginia.

Gist tracked him for some distance and then returned to Washington. They left their fire burning and pushed on, travelling by their compass all night, in order to have the start of those who were very likely to pursue them.

Continuing their march next day, they did not pause till nightfall, when they reached the Alleghany, about two miles above Shannopin's-town. Their dangers, however, were not past.

The river was not frozen over, but it was full of floating ice and seemed impassable. Next day they determined to build a raft. Their only tool was an axe, and not a very good one at that; but after a day's hard work they succeeded in constructing their raft, which they launched into the midst of the floating ice, using what are called setting-poles to direct its course. When they were half way over, Washington was jerked from the raft into the midst of the ice and water, and with difficulty escaped drowning.

With all their exertions, they found it impossible either to advance or return, but succeeded in gaining an island in the middle of the river,* where they

* This island is known as "Washington's Island. It is two or three miles above Pittsburgh, just opposite the Arsenal."—LOSSING.

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passed the night miserably enough, and such was the cold that Gist had his hands and feet frozen.

In the morning the travellers, to their great joy, found the ice so closely packed that they were able to cross on foot to the farther shore, where they found a comfortable lodging in the house of Mr. Frazier, an Indian trader.

Here they remained several days, and Washington took occasion to make a call on a lady. This was no less a person than Aliquippa, a famous squaw chief, who lived some miles away.

This lady's dignity had been sorely hurt that Washington and his party had passed without calling upon her; but she was easily appeased by the polite attentions of the young officer and by the present of the old military coat which Washington had worn on his travels through the woods, and which one would hardly suppose could by that time have been much of an ornament to a lady's wardrobe.

On the 6th of January, Washington arrived at Williamsburg, where he delivered the letter of the French commandant to Governor Dinwiddie and made a full report of his expedition.

The manner in which Washington had acquitted himself, the good sense, bravery and firmness which he had shown under very trying and difficult circumstances, pointed him out to the Governor and the public as a man fit for places of trust, whether military or civil.

CHAPTER IV.

BRADDOCK'S DEFEAT.

AS might have been expected, the French commander's letter was altogether unsatisfactory. It was very polite and abounded in praise of Mr. Washington, but declared the commandant's intention to sustain the claims of his master, the French king, as was indeed no more than his duty. The letter and the account Washington gave of what he had seen and heard proved clearly that the French were in earnest—that they would probably descend the Ohio and take possession of the country as soon as possible. Captain Trent was sent out to raise a band of men and to finish the fort which the Ohio Company had begun. It was a singular choice of a commander on the part of the Governor, and turned out as might have been expected.

Washington was also empowered to raise a company. Governor Dinwiddie bestirred himself to make alliances with the Indians, to rouse the colonies in general to united action, and to obtain money and supplies from the House of Burgesses in Virginia. He was not very successful in either attempt. The Indians rendered very little active service. The colonies were afraid of being drawn into a war for which they might be blamed in England, and the House of Burgesses showed what

the Governor termed "a disloyal French spirit," asking inconvenient questions, raising doubts of the justice of the war, and when they did at last vote the sum of ten thousand pounds, appointing a committee to confer with the Governor as to its application.

The Governor considered himself deeply ill-used, but there was no help for it, and he revenged himself by complaining to the authorities at home of the republican spirit of the people, which he feared "would render them more and more difficult to be brought to order."

Governor Dinwiddie ordered three hundred men to be enlisted and divided into six companies. The command of the whole force was offered to Washington, who, however, with his usual modesty, thought himself too young and too inexperienced in military affairs to accept the chief command.

He was made lieutenant-colonel under Mr. Joshua Fry, an English gentleman of worth and position. After many delays and difficulties, Washington recruited his company and set out for the border. The march through the wilderness was severe in the extreme, as Washington and his men had to prepare roads for Colonel Fry, who was following with the artillery. They had expected that Trent would have pack horses waiting them at Wills' Creek, so that the rest of the march could be made in light order, but before they reached the creek they were met by the alarming news that Trent and his whole company had fallen into the hands of the French.

Trent, however, was found safe and sound at Wills'

Creek, having left his men at work on the fort, under command of Frazier, who, from a gunsmith and trader, had turned his attention to the less profitable trade of a soldier. Washington, greatly alarmed, wished to press on to ascertain the truth of the report; but Trent, inefficient as usual, had forgotten to send the pack horses, and without them it was impossible to go on.

While Washington waited for the horses and wagons, for which he was obliged to send forty miles, to Winchester, Captain Trent's company arrived, bringing with them their working tools.

After Trent's departure, Frazier had gone home, leaving the party under command of a young ensign, and while both these officers were absent, Captain Contrecœur made his appearance before the half-finished fort with a thousand men and several field pieces. The young ensign could do nothing but surrender, and obtained from the French only permission to carry home his men with their axes, spades and other tools, the arms being left behind. The French leader asked the young officer to sup with him, and treated him with great civility, and as he had promised, he dismissed the party next morning, politely wishing them a pleasant journey.

The ensign was accompanied by two of the old Half King's warriors, who renewed his promises of friendship to the English and claimed their assistance.

Washington despatched one of the warriors to Governor Dinwiddie, and sent back the other with a message to the Half King inviting him, with other chiefs of the Six Nations, to meet him on the road as soon as possible and hold a council. Washington was now in

a critical position. He was in the midst of the wilderness with a small body of men, most of whom had never seen service, and with a French and Indian force of unknown strength before him. It would not do to fall back, and yet it was dangerous to go on. A council was called, and it was decided to push forward as far as the Ohio Company's storehouses on Redstone Creek, fortify themselves and send for help.

On the 29th of April, Washington set out for Wills' Creek with a hundred and sixty men, expecting to be followed by the artillery and the soldiers for which he had sent back to Governor Dinwiddie. He knew that the Assembly of Pennsylvania was in session, and that that of Maryland would meet in a few days, and he wrote directly to the governors of both colonies, endeavoring to rouse them to action in a cause which was quite as much their own as it was Virginia's. There was a disagreement, however, between the assemblies and their governors, and no help came from either colony.

Trent's men, instead of waiting for Fry's force, as they had been ordered, dispersed to their homes, and in his manifold annoyances Washington had specimens of the troubles which in after life he was to experience on a wider scale. As his march continued, he was met with more and more gloomy accounts from the frontier. The French were in great force. They were buying the favor of all the Indian tribes. Worst of all, they were building a fort on the point of ground which Washington had marked as so suitable for the purpose. There was, however, one piece of good news. The

Half King was on his way to meet the English with fifty warriors.

After a most wearisome march, the little company arrived at the Youghiogheny River, and as they were obliged to build a bridge to cross it, they were delayed some days, and from this place Washington wrote to Governor Dinwiddie.

Through that penny wisdom and pound foolishness which governments too often exercise, the pay of the provincial officers was less than that received by the regular army. The regulars furnished their own table, but such was their pay that they were able to procure all sorts of luxuries, while the provincial officers who had left their homes at such inconvenience to themselves and their families, did duty on water, hard biscuit and salt meat.

The provincial officers resented the indignity, and only that they were in a position of such danger would have resigned their commissions.

Washington shared their feelings, and wrote to the Governor that he "would rather toil like a day laborer for a maintenance than serve on such ignoble terms." He insisted that equal pay was essential to the service. "For my own part," he writes to Colonel Fairfax, "it is a matter almost indifferent to me whether I serve for full pay or as a generous volunteer. Indeed, did my circumstances correspond with my inclinations, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter, for the motives that have led me here are pure and noble; I had no view of acquisition but that of honor, by serving faithfully my king and my country."

While the bridge was in process of construction, Washington set out with a small party and an Indian guide to try whether it were possible to descend the river. The guide soon refused to go on without a present, but was conciliated by the gift of a ruffled shirt and an old coat. The river proved to be navigable only by an Indian canoe, and Washington determined to continue his route by land. On the 23d, the Indian scouts brought word that the French were only about eight hundred strong, and that they had sent out about half their force on some secret expedition, and immediately after came a message from the Half King, to the effect that the French were on their way, intending to fall upon the first English party they met, and begging any officer to whom the message should come to be on his guard. The Half King promised also that in five days he and his chiefs would come and hold a council.

In the evening, Washington heard that the French were crossing the river about eighteen miles above. He hastened to take up a position at a place called Great Meadows. Here he cleared away the bushes and made ready what he is pleased to call "a charming field for an encounter."

Scouts were sent out, who returned without having seen anything of the enemy. The new recruits grew very nervous, believing themselves surrounded by unseen foes. There was an alarm in the night, and the troops kept watch till daybreak. No enemy was visible, but it was found that six men had deserted.

On the 25th Mr. Gist arrived from his place at

Laurel Hill with the news that La Force, a bold and subtle man, was prowling about with a detachment of fifty men, and Washington sent out an officer with seventy-five men in pursuit. About nine o'clock that same evening an Indian runner came in with a second message from the Half King, saying that he had seen the tracks of two Frenchmen, and that no doubt the whole force was near at hand. The Half King and his people were about six miles off. Late as it was, Washington set off with forty men to join his Indian friend, and so difficult was the dark path through the woods that he reached the Indian camp only at sunrise.

The runner had told the truth. The French were encamped in an obscure place in the woods, where they had built cabins for shelter.

Washington now agreed with the Half King upon a plan to surround the French, which was at once put into execution. Washington was first on the ground, and was seen by the French, who ran to arms. A sharp contest followed for about fifteen minutes, when the French fled, but were captured, all but one man, who escaped to carry home the news. Ten were killed in the action, and one wounded, while twenty-one were taken prisoners.

Washington had some trouble to protect these men from the Indians, who, as usual, desired to add to their collection of scalps. Jumonville, the French commander, was killed, and La Force, the veteran spy and mischief-maker, taken prisoner. La Force put on an air of being greatly injured, declared that he and his companions had been merely ambassadors, and as

such ought to have been held sacred. Unfortunately a letter found on Jumonville told a very different story, as did his conduct in lurking about and concealing himself as long as possible.

Washington declared his belief that they were spies, in which opinion the Half King heartily agreed, adding that if his white brothers were so foolish as to let them go, he, the Half King, would "never help them to catch another Frenchman." Notwithstanding this alarming threat, Washington sent the prisoners to Governor Dinwiddie, at Winchester, and furnished La Force and his companion with clothing of his own. He bespoke for them the "favor due to their conduct and personal merit," but he thought it right to put the Governor on his guard against La Force and his pretence of an embassy. The French, however, told their own story, and accused Washington of having fired on a flag of truce and of having *assassinated* Jumonville. Such was his reward for keeping on their heads the scalps of his prisoners. He did not succeed in saving those of the Frenchmen who had been killed. The Half King sent them to his people, and went home himself to do all in his power to rouse his friends and allies to join the English. This was Washington's first battle, and he seems rather to have enjoyed it. Although he was very much exposed, he did not receive a scratch.

He wrote to his brother: "I heard the bullets whistle, and, believe me, there is something *charming* in the sound."

It must be remembered that when Washington wrote

these words he was a very young man, who had just won his first fight. The words were repeated to George the Second.

"He would not say so if he had been used to hear many," was the reply of the fighting old king.

Many years afterward, Washington was asked whether he had really made such a speech.

"If I said so," he answered, "it must have been when I was very young."

Washington, however, was not destined to be as successful in the rest of his campaign. He was unfortunate in his coadjutors, and was kept terribly short of provisions by the knavery or bad management of the commissaries. At one time the men were six days without flour, and when an accidental supply was obtained from an Ohio trader, arrived the Half King with thirty or forty warriors and all their wives and children to be fed. Colonel Fry, who was expected to bring up a reinforcement of Carolina troops, died, and the Carolinians were not only very late in making their appearance, but were rather worse than useless when they did come, never rendering any service during the whole campaign.

By Fry's death, Washington was left in command. He hastened on the construction of the palisaded fort, on which the troops had been employed, and it was appropriately named Fort Necessity. It was at this place that Washington first made the acquaintance of Dr. Craik, who remained his warm friend through life and watched over his deathbed.

A letter from Governor Dinwiddie informed Wash-

Washington's Prayer.

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ington that he might expect soon to see Captain McKay with an independent company of one hundred, from South Carolina.

Washington felt that a company, independent of his command, and insisting on privileges not shared by the other troops, would be worse than useless, and wrote to the Governor that he hoped Captain McKay "would have more sense than to insist upon any unreasonable distinction, because he and his officers had commissions from his Majesty."

A number of friendly chiefs assembled at the camp, to meet Adjutant Muse, who came with messages, medals and presents from the Governor, and there was a vast amount of speech-making, giving of wampum belts and presents, and exchanging of names.

Mr. William Fairfax, Washington's unchanging and judicious friend, had advised him by all means to maintain prayers at the camp, especially in the presence of the Indians, and this was done at Great Meadows, Washington himself acting as chaplain.

"It certainly was not one of the least striking pictures presented in this wild campaign," says Mr. Irving. "The youthful commander presiding, with calm seriousness, over a motley assemblage of half-equipped soldiery, leathern-clad woodsmen and hunters, and painted savages, with their wives and children, and uniting them all in solemn devotion by his own example and demeanor."

On the 16th came in nine French deserters, who reported that the fort at the forks of the river was complete. It had been named Fort Duquesne, in honor

of the Canadian governor. Unless bombs could be thrown in on the land side, it was impregnable. There were five hundred men in the place, and eleven hundred more were expected. The deserters also declared that the pretended embassy had been sent out with hostile intentions.

That same day Captain McKay arrived with his independent company, who, as Washington had feared, were so very independent as to be of no earthly use. Captain McKay would not take orders from a provincial officer, and stood so much upon etiquette, that he would not agree upon any rendezvous in case of danger, nor would he take from Washington the parole and countersign, though it was a matter of necessity for his own company's safety.

Considering that Washington was but twenty-two, and in his first command, he showed a surprising degree of self-control under these difficulties. He kept his temper with the foolish captain, but wrote to Governor Dinwiddie, asking to have the relative authority defined, and saying that if that were impossible, Captain McKay's "absence would tend to the public advantage."

After a day's rest, on the 11th of June, Washington resumed his march toward Redstone Creek.

Captain McKay would not allow his men to work on the road, unless they were allowed a shilling a day extra. Washington had neither the power nor the will to grant this demand, nor did he choose that the South Carolinians should march at their ease, while his own sorely tried men were engaged, with their axes and picks, in the heavy task of road-making.

The independent company were left to keep guard over Fort Necessity.

Various Indian sachems met him on the road, all given to long speeches and promises, and all wanting presents.

He had only reached Gist's place, thirteen miles from Fort Necessity, when he heard that a large number of French and Indians were on their way to attack him. He came to a halt, began to throw up entrenchments, and sent word to McKay to join him. When the captain arrived, he was not too majestic to hold a council of war, and it was decided to retreat. The march was a hard one. There were but few horses, and Washington gave up his own to aid in carrying the ammunition, paying the soldiers liberally out of his own purse to carry his baggage. His officers did the same. The weather was hot. The Virginians took turn about to drag the artillery, while the Carolinians, still standing upon their dignity as king's troops, refused to take any part whatever in the toils incident to a hurried retreat, and walked along at their ease.

When, on the 1st of July, they reached the fort at Great Meadows, the Virginians, in a rage, vowed they would not drag the baggage nor the guns a step further. Washington determined to strengthen his position at Fort Necessity, setting the soldiers a good example by working at the entrenchments with his own hands. He would not condescend to ask help from the Carolinians, and the "king's troops" looked on while the Virginians and their officers felled trees and rolled logs for a breastwork.

It was a hard experience, but it was by no means the last annoyance which Washington was destined to undergo from the arrogance of gentlemen "bearing the king's commission."

They had not set to work upon their fortifications a moment too soon, for the French were upon them before the work was fairly finished. The English made a brave resistance, but everything was against them. Their Indian allies had deserted them before the attack. The rain fell in torrents, and the men, half drowned in the trenches, found their guns getting useless with wet.

In the end the English were obliged to capitulate. Washington sent his old friend Van Braam to settle the terms. Two proposals made by the French were rejected, and a third time he went, and returned with written articles in French. There was neither pen nor paper at hand, and Van Braam had to translate them by word of mouth.

A candle was brought, for the night had fallen, but the rain fell so fast that it was difficult to keep the light burning. Washington and his officers stood around to hear the old soldier read the terms out of French into Dutch-English. Washington and his officers understood that they were allowed to return unmolested to the settlements; that they were to march out with the honors of war, and were to carry away all their property and stores except the large guns, which were to be destroyed; that they should promise not to attempt to build or work on the lands of the king of France for a year; that the prisoners taken in the fight

with Jumonville should be given up, and that until they were, Van Braam and Stobo should be hostages for them.

When the articles came to be understood, however, it was found that the English had pledged themselves not to work "on the lands beyond the mountains for a year," thus leaving the ground clear to the French in the very territory in dispute, and still worse, Washington was made to say that the death of Jumonville was an *assassination.* Notwithstanding the unlucky result of the campaign, Washington and his officers received the thanks of the State Legislature, and eleven hundred dollars were distributed among the private soldiers. Poor Jacob Van Braam paid dearly for his bad French, for not only was he left a prisoner in the hands of the enemy, but was excluded by name from the vote of thanks to the officers, besides being accused of treachery.

It is not at all likely, however, that he was guilty of any worse offence than a bad translation—a misfortune likely enough to happen to an unlettered man, translating in a great hurry from one foreign language into another, and that in the midst of a pouring rain, by the light of one flaring tallow candle.

He was taken by the French to Montreal, and at one time treated with great severity. He finally escaped, went into the English army, was discharged, and lived to write to his old pupil, Washington, a letter of congratulation on his success at the battle of Yorktown.

For some time after the affair at Great Meadows, Washington took no active part in military affairs.

With the blundering arrogance which marked the English colonial policy on more than one occasion, and which did as much as anything to bring about the war of independence, the English government sent orders that all officers holding commissions from the king should rank above all provincial officers, whatever might be their respective positions.

This regulation, together with perpetual misunderstandings with the Governor (a jealous, wrong-headed man), decided Washington to resign his commission, nor would he consent to take it again, though repeatedly urged to do so. He retired to Mount Vernon, and busied himself in cultivating his estate, a pursuit of which he was always very fond. Here he remained till an event occurred which caused great excitement in the colony and called our hero again to arms. This was the arrival of General Braddock, in command of the finest body of British troops ever seen in America. With these troops he proposed to sweep the French from the Ohio, if not from America altogether, and to put an end to the war. Washington's military spirit was once more aroused. The army was far finer than any he had ever seen, and General Braddock was considered one of the best soldiers of the age. Washington intimated his desire to join the expedition as a volunteer. General Braddock heard of it, and at once offered Washington a place on his own staff—a great compliment, though the position was without pay or profit of any kind. Washington at once accepted the offer, despite the remonstrances of his mother, who dreaded to have him again exposed to the dangers of the

wilderness. He wrote her a most respectful and dutiful letter, but, for once, declined to be guided by her advice.

General Braddock received Washington with great civility. He was a stately and somewhat haughty, not to say pompous man, exact, positive and obstinate in maintaining any opinion he had formed. He had a great contempt for the notions of all non-combatants and provincials in general, and evidently thought he was about to carry all before him, and to march through the wilds of the Alleghany Mountains as easily as he would transport his army from London to York. When Washington was struck with utter dismay at what seemed to him totally unnecessary baggage to be transported with the army, and hinted to General Braddock that such a train would greatly hinder their operations, his remark was received with a sarcastic smile. Benjamin Franklin, then postmaster-general, visited the camp at Fredericktown on the business of providing means of transportation for the artillery, provisions and baggage. With all his own exertions Braddock had only been able to obtain twenty-five wagons, where at least one hundred and fifty were needed. He was utterly dismayed, declared that the expedition was at an end, and railed heartily at the powers at home for sending him to such a country. Franklin undertook the affair, and in two weeks time the one hundred and fifty teams, with two hundred and fifty-nine carrying horses, were on their way to camp. The owners thereof, saying that they knew nothing of General Braddock, insisted on Franklin's own bond,

which he willingly gave. He also advanced a large sum of money, very little of which he ever got back again. It was not only in the matter of wagons that Franklin was of service to Braddock's army. Colonel Dunbar represented to him that the condition of the subalterns was a somewhat hard one, as none of them were rich, and all were illy provided with necessaries for a march through the wilderness. Franklin at once bestirred himself, wrote to the proper committee of the Assembly, and sent them a list of such things as he thought would be acceptable. The result was the immediate arrival in camp of twenty parcels of provisions, each containing a supply of tea, coffee, chocolate and other good things, as presents to the officers. "They were very thankfully received," says Franklin, and indeed they ought to have been. General Braddock also made warm acknowledgments for Franklin's services in procuring wagons and provisions, and condescended to sketch for his edification a plan of his intended campaign. "After taking Fort Duquesne," said he, "I am to proceed to Niagara, and having taken that, to Frontegnac, if the season will allow, and I suppose it will, for Duquesne can hardly detain me more than three or four days, and then I see nothing that can obstruct my march to Niagara."

Franklin ventured to hint that there were some few difficulties in the way—that the roads were not all that could be wished, that the Indians were formidable enemies, and that in fact—though he was far too good a courtier to say so—the general was counting his chickens before they were hatched.

"He smiled at my ignorance," says Franklin, "and replied, 'These savages may indeed be a formidable enemy to raw American militia, but on the king's regular and disciplined troops, sir, it is impossible they should make any impression.' I was conscious of my impropriety in disputing with a military man in matters of his profession, and said no more."

At last, after many delays and difficulties, the train was set in motion. The general began his journey in a travelling chariot, with a body-guard of light horse and his staff accompanying him. By the time he reached Fort Cumberland, however, the chariot was laid aside and not again resumed. At Fort Cumberland he was joined by the American forces for which he and his officers entertained a contempt, which they took no pains to disguise, on account of their unsoldier-like appearance and their ignorance of drill; but they were soon to learn that drill was not everything.

Now Braddock's troubles began anew; but the great misfortune of all was, that nobody was able to tell him anything, and he literally believed that what he did not know was not worth knowing. He affronted the Americans by abusing their country and every one in it. He affronted the Indian chiefs—quite as fine gentlemen as himself in their way—by never calling them in council or asking their advice, and in the end most of his Indian allies deserted him. He was determined to make a regular military road, and as Washington wrote, "He halted to level every molehill and to bridge every brook, by which means he was four days in getting twelve miles." He did even worse.

There was a certain noted ranger called by the whites Captain Jack, and by the Indians Black Rifle, who had been engaged by an American officer to join the expedition. Captain Jack had pushed out into the wilderness, and made himself a home, where he lived peacefully enough with his wife and children. One day, however, on returning from a hunting expedition, he found his cabin burned and his wife and children murdered by the Indians. From that hour Jack forsook all peaceful pursuits and the homes of civilized men, and occupied himself solely in watching the frontier and protecting the outlying settlers from the savages. He was looked upon by the Indians with extreme and superstitious dread, and by the whites with equally superstitious veneration, and happy was the man whose hospitality Black Rifle condescended to accept for a night.

At Little Meadows, Black Rifle presented himself with a band of rangers, used, like himself, to all the wiles of Indian warfare, and asked for an interview with the general. It may be easily understood how valuable such a band of men would prove as guides, scouts and sharpshooters. Braddock, however, in his amazing folly and self-conceit, treated the offer of service with contempt and the old ranger himself with uncivil arrogance. "There was time enough for making arrangements," he said, "and he had experienced troops on whom he could rely." Black Rifle, indignant at such a reception of his services, returned to his band, and one and all, shouldering their rifles, withdrew into the woods and betook themselves to

their former task of guarding the Pennsylvania frontier.

Meantime matters grew worse and worse, and General Braddock made the rather late discovery that even a British general might not know everything, and condescended to ask advice. Washington was the man to whom he turned, and the young soldier gave his advice modestly, but very decidedly. He counselled an immediate attack upon Fort Duquesne. He advised the general to make a rapid march with the light troops, leaving behind the more cumbrous baggage, and, indeed, everything that could possibly be spared. His advice was partly taken, and twelve hundred men, with ten field-pieces, were selected for the service. Washington earnestly repeated his advice that the amount of personal baggage should be reduced as far as possible, in order that the animals used in its transportation might be used as pack-horses for the general service. He gave up his own horse for the purpose, but when it came to the other officers, it turned out that, out of two hundred and twelve, only eleven horses could be spared for public use. The march, too, instead of being rapid, was as slow as ever, for the general could not be prevailed upon to abandon his darling road-making, even in the present pressing emergency. Washington had been unwell for several days, and now became very ill, with intense headache and a high fever. General Braddock treated his young friend with the greatest kindness and consideration, and at last insisted on his remaining behind the rest at the crossing of the Yough-

iogheny river. He left him a good store of provisions, and his friend and physician, Doctor Craik. Nothing but the general's express command, and the positive assurances of the physician that his life depended on his obedience, could have induced Washington to remain behind.* As it was, he only stayed seven days, and, on the arrival of some troops, who were carrying provisions to the camp, he went forward with them, travelling in one of the wagons, as he was unable to sit on his horse.

He did not find matters in a very promising condition. The Indians were hovering about the camp. Every now and then they snapped up a horse or fell upon and scalped some unlucky straggler, while they themselves were as invisible to the English soldiers as if they had been made of air. Indeed it was their boast that they had tracked and watched Braddock through his whole march—a boast they would hardly have been able to make but for the general's unceremonious treatment of Black Rifle and his sharpshooters. A great deal of valuable time had been wasted, and no certain intelligence had been procured of the enemy's force or movements.

It is pleasant to be able to record one instance of good sense and good feeling on the part of the unfortunate General Braddock. It chanced one day, after several stragglers had been killed, that a party of grenadiers came upon a small number of friendly

* Washington says the general saved his life by ordering the physician to give him James' powders—now considered a very mild remedy

Indians, and not understanding their signs, fired upon them. Only one was killed, but he proved to be the son of Scarooyadi, a chief of eminence among the Indian allies. Becoming aware of their mistake, the grenadiers took up the body, and, with great respect, carried it to the camp. General Braddock sent at once for the father and the other Indians, condoled with them on the misfortune which had taken place, and made the presents which Indian usage demanded on such an occasion. He also ordered the body of the young man to be buried with all the honors of war. All the officers attended the service, and a volley was fired over the grave. The father and other friends were pacified by these marks of respect, and remained faithful to the end of the disastrous campaign.

Washington found General Braddock encamped within fifteen miles of Fort Duquesne, and determined to attack the enemy without delay. His plans were all laid, and when Washington suggested that the Virginia Rangers should be despatched as an advanced guard, he received an angry reply. Braddock had arranged to send forward two or three companies of regular troops, and he had not yet arrived at the point where he could be told anything.

Early in the morning, Colonel Gage was sent forward with the advance. With the grenadiers was an independent company, commanded by Captain Horatio Gates. A working party followed to clear the road, and by sunrise the whole army was in motion, with drums beating and colors flying, the polished arms and scarlet uniforms making a gallant show. Despite his

weakness, Washington mounted his horse and joined the staff. It was his first view of a regular and disciplined force, and he was enthusiastic in his admiration, and often spoke in after life of the impressions made upon him. Gage went first with the advance; then Sir John St. Clair, with the working party and the two six-pounders; then General Braddock, with the main body, while the Virginians and other provincial troops brought up the rear.

They were now upon a piece of level ground, marching on a road about twelve feet wide, flanked on each side by ravines covered with brushwood. Had Washington's advice been followed, these ravines would have been explored by scouting parties, but none were sent out, even in advance. As some one sarcastically remarked, the men were disposed as if for a review in Hyde Park.

The advance party were just ascending a rising ground, and General Braddock was about to follow, when he heard quick and heavy firing ahead. Exactly what Washington had feared had come to pass. A body of French and Indians had occupied the rising ground, and the advance party under Gage had walked straight into the trap laid for them. A great number of men fell at the first fire, and the rest were driven back on the main body, leaving their cannon behind them. Gage tried to make his men charge with the bayonet and clear the hill from whence came the sharpest fire, but in vain. The men were utterly appalled by the yells of the savages, and absolutely refused to quit the line of march.

All was now confusion and dismay. The British troops, unused to bush fighting, surrounded by an unseen enemy, were panic-stricken, and refused to advance. The Virginians waited for no orders; they broke at once, and each man "took a tree," whence he could pick off the Indians as they showed themselves. Washington begged Braddock to allow the regulars to do the same, but, obstinate to the last, he persisted in forming the men into platoons, thus making them more conspicuous targets for the Indian marksmen. Some of the men, seeing how the day was going, attempted to follow the example of the Virginians, but the general stormed and swore at them, called them cowards, and even struck them.* The officers behaved with the most self-sacrificing bravery, and strove in every way, by entreaties, threats, and example, to inspirit their men, but all in vain. They only lost their own lives without accomplishing anything. The Indians picked off every man on horseback, and the English soldiers, huddled together without order, fired their pieces wildly, killing more of their own friends than of their enemies. Every now and then an Indian, with feathered head and painted face, would spring forward, scalp a fallen officer, or snatch the bridle of a riderless horse, and retreat unharmed.

All through this dreadful and shameful day, Washington was in the saddle. His brother aids were all either killed or wounded early in the action, and he alone was left to carry the orders of the general. He was in every part of the field at once, taking no care

* See note in Appendix.

for his own life. He had four bullets through his coat, and two horses were shot under him, but he never received a scratch, and the Indians gazed at him with superstitious wonder, as one who bore a charmed life. He was sent to the main body to bring the artillery into action; but Sir Peter Halket had been shot down, and the men could not be kept to the guns. Had the ravines been raked with grape shot, say the historians, the day might have been saved, but it could not be done. The men would or could do nothing, and the only gun fired was fired by Washington's own hands.

At last all hope was over. General Braddock had constantly remained in the midst of the hottest fire, while officers and men fell around him. Finally he was struck by a bullet, which wounded him in the arm, and then lodged in his lungs. He fell into the arms of an American, Captain Stewart, who, with the help of another officer and a servant, placed him in a tumbril, and carried him away. It is said that, in his misery and despair, he begged his preservers to leave him on the field to die. The rout was complete. The wagoners took each a horse from his team and rode off. The men fled pell-mell, dragging their officers with them, while the Indians pursued them with frightful cries. Only the eagerness of the savages for scalps and plunder saved the English force from utter destruction. Before they reached the river, which they had crossed with such pomp and pride in the morning, nearly eight hundred had fallen, of whom more than sixty were officers. The Virginians had suffered most, and one regiment was all but annihilated.

About a quarter of a mile from the ford, some hundred men were stopped, and formed in an advantageous position. Braddock was still able to give orders, and he had some faint hope of keeping the ground till the arrival of reinforcements; but the men were thoroughly cowed, and in the course of an hour it was found that the most of them had stolen away. Braddock and his wounded aids, Orme and Morris, witnessed their flight, and were afterwards joined by Gage, with eighty men, whom he had brought off.

Washington, ill as he was, went forward to Dunbar's camp, forty miles away, to bring up guards, provisions and wagons for the wounded. He found the camp in the greatest distress and confusion. Tidings of Braddock's defeat had reached it before him, and the officers had hard work to prevent a general rout. Washington executed his orders, and returned as quickly as possible, meeting General Braddock at Gist's plantation. On the thirteenth of July, the sorrowful party reached Great Meadows, and here General Braddock died. He had said very little the first day or two, except to repeat the words more than once: "Who would have thought it?" Once he said: "We shall know how to meet them another time!" But there was no other time for him. He had had his day, and it was gone. He was very patient and grateful, spoke warmly of the bravery of the Virginians, and expressed his gratitude to them and to Captain Stewart. He apologized to Washington for neglecting his advice, and bequeathed to him his favorite horse, and also his faithful servant, named Bishop, who had kept close to

his master's side all that disastrous day, and had helped to carry him off the field.

General Braddock died on the thirteenth of July, 1755, and was buried the same night at Great Meadows. The funeral was conducted with haste and secrecy, and the chaplain being wounded, Washington read the funeral service over his late commander. It is said that the baggage wagons were made to pass over the grave next day, the more effectually to conceal it from the Indians. It is still known and pointed out to visitors.

Thus died a brave man and a gallant soldier, who owed his defeat and death mainly to his own obstinacy and self-conceit. He was fully persuaded of his own superiority to all about him, and that persuasion led him on till it ended in his own ruin, and that of his companions.

Of the brave army which had left Fort Cumberland on the nineteenth of June, with all the pomp of war, a miserable remnant returned on the seventeenth of July, beaten, dispirited and distressed. Still there were left about fifteen hundred men—enough to have made a stand, if there had been any one to command them; but Colonel Dunbar, the senior surviving officer, was too thoroughly scared to think of such a thing. He had lost all his ammunition and artillery in his flight. Leaving his sick and wounded at Fort Cumberland, he pushed on, and never stopped till he found himself in Philadelphia, where nobody was particularly glad to see him.

To add to the disgrace of the defeat, it was discovered

that the attacking force consisted of only eight hundred and fifty men, who had been sent out to keep the enemy in check, while the French commander made up his mind whether he should surrender or hold the fort. He was utterly astonished when the ambuscading party returned in triumph, laden with scalps and booty, leading long trains of pack-horses, and grotesquely arrayed in the gold-laced coats and caps of the fallen Englishmen. They had lost only about seventy men in all. The guns were fired, troops were sent out in pursuit, and the savages celebrated their easy victory with songs, scalp dances and abundance of rum.

We learn from Franklin's biography that certain gentlemen came to him with a subscription paper to pay the cost of fireworks, with which to celebrate the downfall of Fort Duquesne. They were very much astonished when Franklin looked gravely upon the matter, and one of them said, hastily: "You don't surely suppose that the fort will not be taken." "The events of war," said Franklin, "are subject to great uncertainty." The subscription was dropped, and the projectors thereby saved themselves a great mortification. Franklin, on the same occasion, makes a very significant remark. "This whole transaction," he says, "gave us our first suspicion that our exalted idea of the prowess of British troops was not well founded."

CHAPTER V.

THE TAKING OF FORT DUQUESNE—WASHINGTON'S MARRIAGE.

ON the 26th of July, Washington returned to Mount Vernon, having impaired his private estate, injured his health, undergone endless hardship and fatigue, and gained nothing, as he himself said, "but a sound beating." In this last particular, however, he was mistaken. He had gained much valuable experience and a great deal of reputation, notwithstanding the disastrous defeat in which he had shared. In a sermon preached the same year by the Reverend Samuel Davis, he was spoken of as "that heroic youth Colonel Washington, *whom I cannot but hope Providence hath preserved in so signal a manner for some important service to his country.*" The time was to come when the good man's words would read like a prophecy. We cannot but think, as we read the story of his Virginia campaigns, that Washington was indeed being trained for the great work he was to accomplish hereafter.

The news of Braddock's defeat and death soon spread over the whole country, carrying grief and alarm to every town and village, and especially to the outlying settlements most exposed to the marauding

parties of the French and Indians. While the French glorified themselves and made classical allusions, in their usual boasting fashion, and the Jesuits of Montreal sang Te Deum over the victory, the settlers in the Shenandoah and Mohawk Valleys, and in the borders of New Hampshire and Vermont, looked well to the priming of their rifles when they went out to do their evening "chores," or to see to their pasturing stock, while their wives watched anxiously for their return, started at every unaccustomed sound, and fancied in the hoot of the owl or the cry of the whippoorwill the signal of an Indian assault. Too often the fancy was not a vain one. Such sounds were frequently used as signal cries, and the woman who left home for a night to watch with a sick neighbor, or the man who went to the nearest town on business, returned to find the log house a heap of smoking ashes, the stock butchered in very wantonness, and the little baby or the old grandmother, too feeble to be a valuable prisoner, lying dead and mangled amid the ruins of the home.

Do you say that these things are too horrible to be told—that they are past and gone, and should be forgotten? I do not think so. It was amid scenes like these that the tree of our liberties was planted. It was with blood and tears and heavy strokes that it was nourished and watered and pruned, till it became a great tree, in which all the fowls of the air came to lodge and shelter. Let it be our part to see that none of these same fowls rob our fair tree of its legitimate fruits or break down any of its branches,—that rats

and other unclean vermin do not undermine the stately trunk till it becomes a foul decaying ruin, fit for their own filthy brood and for nothing else.

It now became evident that some active measures must be taken for the public safety. The need was so pressing that for once the Governor and the House of Burgesses were agreed, and the house voted a supply of forty thousand pounds and the raising of a regiment. Washington was at once offered the command. His mother was distressed at having her favorite son again exposed to the dangers from which he had so lately escaped, and begged him to remain at home. He wrote her the following letter in reply:—

"Honored Madam:

"If it is in my power to avoid going to the Ohio again, I shall; but if the command is pressed upon me by the general voice of the country, and offered upon such terms as cannot be objected against, it would reflect dishonor on me to refuse it, and that, I am sure, must and ought to give you greater uneasiness than my going in an honorable command. Upon no other terms will I accept it. At present I have no proposals made to me, nor have I any advice of such an intention except from private hands."

Washington had not long to wait for the "proposals." On the very day when this letter was sent he received news that he was appointed commander-in-chief of all the forces to be raised in the colony. The appointment was not at all to the taste of Governor Dinwiddie, who had always been jealous of Washing-

ton, and from henceforth annoyed and hindered him by every means in his power.

Washington fixed his headquarters at Williamsburg, where he had a foretaste of the vexations which he was afterwards to encounter on a much larger scale. The men would not volunteer, the militia could not be mustered. There were no wagons and no horses, and it was impossible to obtain them save by force. Meantime the alarms constantly increased, and accounts came from every quarter of the ravages committed by the Indians. One of these alarms, though terrible enough at the time, had an absurd termination. One Sunday an express came riding into Williamsburg almost speechless from fright and hurry. He declared that the Indians were within twelve miles of the town —that they had attacked and destroyed the house of Isaac Julian, and were burning and murdering all before them. The town guards were at once strengthened, and every man armed for whom weapons were to be found. The night passed in sleepless terror, and next morning matters were still worse. Another messenger came in, declaring that the Indians were within four miles of the town. He himself had heard their yells, the report of their guns and the screams of their victims. Washington at once put himself at the head of forty men, pushed forward to the scene of action, and captured—three drunken troopers, who were yelling, firing off their pieces, and indulging in other uncouth demonstrations of satisfaction over their liquor. These heroes were carried to town and lodged in the guard-house, to repent at leisure. The Indians who

had attacked Julian's farm proved to be an old negro and a young mulatto, who were out looking for stray cattle, and being seen by a young son of Julian's, were magnified into a whole war-party.

At last the band of Indians who had been plundering the country retreated, carrying off much valuable plunder and a great number of unhappy prisoners, whose fate was often far worse than that of the children and friends they had seen murdered. Some of these prisoners were afterwards recovered. Others were adopted by their captors, learned their language and married among them, and these last almost invariably refused to return to civilized life when the chance was offered them. Washington followed the trail of the war-party till he was satisfied that they had crossed the Ohio, and that farther pursuit would be worse than useless. After his return, the land had a little breathing time. Washington endeavored to improve it by drilling his men and filling up his companies. The old question of rank was again brought forward, and made a good deal of trouble and discontent. To settle the matter, once for all, Washington was sent to Boston to hold a conference with Major General Shirley, then commander of all the forces in the English colonies. He travelled on horseback with his two aids, Captains Mercer and Stewart, and the gentlemen were attended by their black servants in handsome liveries, as the custom was in those times, when gentlemen affected more state and ceremony than is customary in these days. The journey of nearly five hundred miles in length was made in the

middle of winter; but our young friends do not seem to have found it specially disagreeable. They were known everywhere as the young officers who had acquitted themselves so well in the disastrous day of Braddock's defeat, and Washington especially was looked upon with great favor as a rising young man, the future hope of the colonies. They were treated with distinguished attention in every place where they stopped, and in Philadelphia and New York some fine entertainments were given for them. In Boston General Shirley treated them with the greatest politeness; but the question of rank was not settled, and continued to be a source of vexation and embarrassment so long as the colonies remained under the king.

Washington remained in Boston about ten days, much interested in all he saw, and receiving a great deal of flattering attention. He then returned to New York, where it is said he was greatly taken with the charms of Miss Mary Philipse, a beautiful and wealthy young lady, sister-in-law to Washington's friend, Beverly Robinson. If so, he had no time to prosecute his suit, for he was quickly hurried home by the most alarming news from Virginia. He found the French and Indians once more threatening his native State, and even menacing his old friend Lord Fairfax in his home at Greenway Court. The sturdy old nobleman, however, absolutely refused to retire from his exposed situation, declaring that such an act would seem like a voluntary desertion of the poor people who had settled on his lands. He armed his numerous servants, huntsmen and other retainers, laid in military

stores, and with his nephew, Colonel Martin, remained to garrison his old stone house, in which, by the way, he was never attacked.

At Winchester, Washington found matters worse than before. No troops could be spared from Fort Cumberland, and no men could be raised at home. The poor people at Winchester, who seem at best to have been a somewhat helpless set, clung to Washington, and as usual expected him to perform impossibilities. He wrote to Governor Dinwiddie:—

"I am too little acquainted with pathetic language to attempt a description of these people's distresses. But what can I do? I see their situations; I know their danger, without having it in my power to give them any relief but by uncertain promises. The supplicating tears of the women and moving petitions of the men melt me into such deadly sorrow that I solemnly declare, if I know my own mind, I could offer myself a willing sacrifice to the butchering enemy, provided that would contribute to the people's ease."

This letter seems to have answered the purpose as well as any pathetic language could have done. Governor Dinwiddie sent all the militia he could muster to the defence of Winchester. The House of Burgesses at last discovered that something was really the matter, and voted to raise a force of fifteen hundred men and the sum of twenty thousand pounds. With this money it was proposed to erect a chain of forts reaching from the Potomac to Carolina—a distance of nearly four hundred miles. Washington was strongly opposed to this project, and brought many excellent

reasons against it, one of which was that the forts could not be less than eighteen or twenty miles apart, which would afford ample room for the enemy to slip through between them. But his advice was unheeded, and the forts were ordered to be built. Governor Dinwiddie seems to have taken pains to mortify, perplex and hinder the young commander by every means in his power. He threw all Washington's arrangements into confusion by counter-orders, upset his carefully-considered plans, and even went so far as to complain of him to Lord Loudon, the English commander. Washington wrote his lordship a long letter, explaining his conduct with his usual direct simplicity, and afterward visited him in Philadelphia on occasion of a meeting between Lord Loudon and the Southern commanders. Lord Loudon treated him with great civility and consulted him upon the military affairs of the province; but as he declined to act upon his advice, and sustained the plan of the chain of forts, the visit, on the whole, was not very satisfactory. Washington was disappointed at not obtaining a king's commission, on which he had set his heart—a disappointment which he felt very deeply at the time, but which afterward saved him from a good deal of embarrassment. He was now anxious to retire altogether from public life. Everything went wrong. The great success which the French were obtaining in the North, particularly the capture and destruction of Fort Oswego, had the natural effect of emboldening their allies, the savages. The Indians made perpetual raids on the frontier. The Shenandoah Valley, with other outlying

settlements, was abandoned. Hundreds of men, women and children were killed or taken captive. Washington was left to defend a frontier of seven hundred and fifty miles with about seven hundred ill-disciplined, half-fed and insubordinate troops. The Governor continued his persecutions, charging Washington with carelessness, and with impertinence to his mighty self, refusing him even a very short leave of absence to attend to his private concerns; and, in short, treating him with all the spite which a weak man in authority is apt to bestow on any one under him whom he suspects of the crime of knowing more than himself. At last, not Washington's patience, but his health gave way. He suffered severely, and by the urgent advice of his friend, Dr. Craik, he gave up his command and returned to Mount Vernon. This was in the year 1758. In the same year the valiant and astute Governor Dinwiddie was recalled, and went home regretted by nobody.

For several months Washington remained at home suffering severely. He seems to have been very desponding about his own state, and believed himself to be falling into consumption, like his brother Lawrence. At last, however, his health began to improve, and in April, 1758, we find him again in active service at Fort Loudon. A new governor had come out, and General Abercrombie had taken the place of Lord Loudon, of whom Franklin had once said, "Like Saint George on the tavern sign-board, he was always on horseback but never rode on." The military affairs of the colonies had been put upon a better footing by the

wise exertions of Mr. Pitt. Colonel Forbes, who had the principal command of the English forces in Virginia, decided on undertaking once more the capture of Fort Duquesne. Washington, who was still commander of the Virginia forces, went at once to Winchester. Here he gathered together about nineteen hundred men, whom he drilled with untiring industry. He was also joined by about seven hundred Indian warriors. There was the usual want of tents, provisions, arms, and everything else necessary for the efficiency of an army, and Washington set off for Williamsburg to hold a consultation with Colonel Forbes and his military advisers. On his way he fell in with a certain Mr. Chamberlayne, and was with some difficulty persuaded to stop at this gentleman's house long enough to take dinner. Here he was introduced to a lady, Mrs. Martha Custis by name, a young widow with two little children, and what was for those times a large fortune. She is said to have been a very pretty woman, small, but graceful, with dark eyes and hair, and remarkably pleasant and engaging manners. Somehow or other, the hour which could hardly be spared for dinner lengthened out into three or four. The horses, after waiting till they were weary, were sent back to the stable, and our hero remained at the Chamberlayne mansion all night. "Happy's the wooing that's not long a-doing," says a respectable old proverb. Mrs. Custis lived at a place known as "the White House," not far from Williamsburg. Washington stayed but a short time in that city, and we may conclude he was kept reasonably busy, for not only

did he settle matters with Colonel Forbes, but he was equally successful in coming to an agreement with Mrs. Custis, and when he returned to Winchester, it was with the expectation of marrying the fair lady at the close of the coming campaign.

But he had not arrived at the end of his vexations. The time was slipping away. The Indians, growing impatient at the long delay, had almost entirely deserted him. The troops were losing heart and discipline from inaction, and were ill-supplied with necessaries, especially with clothes. Washington advised that they should be dressed in Indian style, with hunting shirts and leggins. "It is an unbecoming dress for an officer, I own," he writes, "but convenience rather than show I think should be consulted." For a wonder, the English commander, Colonel Bouquet, saw the advantages of such a costume, and it was generally adopted. Washington afterward advocated the same dress for the Continental army, but without success.

At last everything was supposed to be in readiness, and then Washington learned, to his surprise and vexation, that the road which had been constructed at such expense in Braddock's campaign was to be abandoned, and a new one made through the woods and swamps of Pennsylvania. In vain both Washington and the Virginia Assembly remonstrated. The English officers had been scared by the terrific accounts which Braddock had given of his route, and they were moreover governed by the representations of the Pennsylvania Indian traders, who no doubt thought such a road would be very convenient for their own pur-

poses. Sixteen hundred men were set to work on this new road, and after some weeks of immense toil and fatigue, they penetrated to a place called Loyal Hannan, about fifty miles from Fort Duquesne. Here Colonel Bouquet halted with about two thousand men and set up a depot for provisions, and from this place he sent forward Major Grant with eight hundred men, partly Highlanders, partly Virginians, to reconnoiter the fort and find out the force and disposition of the enemy. Washington had always been strongly opposed to such expeditions, and the result of the present justified him in his opposition. Major Grant acted like a vainglorious fool, or a drunken man, and very probably may have been both. Instead of advancing with all the secrecy possible, he seemed determined to attract the attention of the enemy and keep them advised of his movements. When he arrived in the neighborhood of the fort, he sent forth a party to burn a log house under its walls. Not content with that, next morning he ordered the drums to be beaten, the men to be set in battle array, and sent out an engineer with a party to take a plan of the fort in full view of the enemy. One has hardly patience to write or read of such folly. Most likely he thought he was going to capture the fort all by himself, and so carry off the whole glory of the expedition.

If this was his aim, he was sadly disappointed. Like a grim old spider, the French commander lay quiet in the centre of his net, till the silly flies were fairly entangled in its meshes. Then he rushed out upon them. At the same time, the flank of the little

force was attacked by parties of Indians, who were lying in ambush. It was a repetition, on a smaller scale, of Braddock's defeat. The British officers marshalled their men according to European tactics. Both officers and men fought with determined bravery, and the Highlanders especially stood their ground; but there was no chance from the first. The fight became a mere butchery, with hatchet and scalping-knife. Grant surrendered to a French officer, and the whole force was put to flight and confusion. Again it was an American officer who checked the enemy, and brought off all that could be saved. Captain Bullitt had been left with fifty Virginians to guard the baggage. Sending off the most valuable part of the stores on horses, he made a barricade with the wagons, within which he received such of the fugitives as were able to reach him. With a couple of well-directed volleys and a bayonet charge, he first checked and then put to flight the triumphant enemy, and brought back to Loyal Hannan the little force, with the loss of twenty-one officers and two hundred and seventy-three privates. Washington's own regiment lost sixty-two men and two officers. It was, perhaps, some consolation to the survivors that Colonel Forbes publicly complimented the Virginians on their steadiness and bravery, and especially distinguished Captain Bullitt, who was afterwards made a major. Washington, who might have had the poor comfort of saying "I told you so," excuses Colonel Bouquet as far as possible, and says, "It is generally admitted that Grant exceeded his orders."

Everything earthly must have some sort of an end, and at last, after several changes of council, after decisions and counter decisions, the twenty-fifth day of November saw the British force in front of Fort Duquesne. The latter part of their march must have been sad and disheartening enough, for at every step they met with piteous relics of their former companions slain and mangled by the pitiless Indians. Taught at last by their reverses, they advanced with great precaution and silence till they came in sight of the fort. Lo and behold, they found nothing to do. Alarmed and disheartened by the British successes at the north, and the approach of the southern army, the commander waited till Forbes was within one day's march, when he blew up his magazine, set fire to the fort and retreated down the Ohio with his whole force. The ruins of the fort were still smoking when Washington with the advanced guard marched in and planted the English flag on what had so long been the terror and scourge of the southern colonies.

The first thing done was to gather up and bury the remains of the brave and unfortunate men who fell under Braddock and Grant. This was done with all possible honors, and it is said that every one assisted in the work from the commanders down to the private soldiers, some of whom had been comrades of the deceased. The next duty was to put the fort in a defensible condition. This was soon done, and it was named Fort Pitt, in honor of the famous English minister. A great and busy city now occupies the place where so many Indian raids were planned, and where so many

brave men laid down their lives. The railroad brakeman calls out "Braddock's" as the express train rushes past the field of the terrible defeat about ten miles from Pittsburgh, and even now bullets are sometimes cut out of trees and fragments of arms or bits of bone are ploughed up in the fields.

Thus ended for the time the trials and dangers of Western Virginia. The Indians, no longer stirred up and sustained by the French, ceased to be troublesome. They began to make friendly advances toward their English neighbors, and a peace was soon concluded with them, which they observed as well as could reasonably be expected. Settlers once more poured into the beautiful and fertile Shenandoah Valley. People who had abandoned their farms went back to them once more, and old Lord Fairfax might disarm his little garrison at Greenway Court, and henceforth pursue his foxes and entertain his friends in peace.

Washington now had leisure to follow out his own plans. The necessity for his services in the army existed no longer, since there was peace in the borders. He had always been fond of a quiet life in his home at Mount Vernon, and he was likely to find it henceforth pleasanter than ever. He resigned his military commission, and on the sixth of January, 1759, he was married at the White House to Mrs. Martha Custis. The marriage was a happy one in every respect.

During his last campaign in the wilderness, Washington had been elected a member of the House of Burgesses. When he took his seat for the first time,

he was received with the greatest demonstrations of respect by his fellow-members, and Mr. Robinson, the speaker, thanked him warmly for the services he had rendered to the Commonwealth. Washington rose to reply, but was so overcome that he colored and stammered like a school-boy, and was unable to utter a word. "Sit down, Mr. Washington," said the speaker; "your modesty equals your valor, and that surpasses the power of any language I possess!"

I have been somewhat particular in tracing Washington's early career, in order to show that he did not become a great commander all at once, as some people seem to suppose. He had a long previous training, and made the most of his opportunities. The mathematics so needful for an officer he learned by steady painstaking industry in a small country school. When he was first appointed to a military command, at the age of nineteen, he went to work in the same sober, painstaking spirit to qualify himself for his new duties, by learning military tactics and fencing. From his first appointment in 1751 to his marriage in 1759, he was almost constantly under arms, and that in a service far more trying to the patience and temper of a young man than any ordinary warfare. During all this time he seems to have been in a kind of school to prepare him for the great responsibilities which were afterward to fall upon him. The best way to learn to do anything is to do it, and it is by faithfully working at small tasks that men learn to accomplish large ones. There have been many men in the world of far more splendid talents than Washington, who have done

nothing but harm. Washington's greatness lay in his faithfulness in doing his duty in that state of life to which it pleased God to call him, and that is a greatness which is within the power of every one. Washington was deeply and soberly religious, and, as may be seen by his letters, lived in a state of habitual dependence upon God, and to him the promise was made good, "He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation."*

* Ps. xxiv. 4, 5.

CHAPTER VI.

LIFE AT MOUNT VERNON—BEGINNING OF THE WAR.

WASHINGTON remained about three months at the White House, the residence of his wife, and then, returning to Mount Vernon, he settled down to that quiet home life which was always his delight. The estate was both fertile and beautiful, and gave abundant scope for those experiments in farming to which he was always greatly given. There was also plenty of room for the out-of-door sports—the fox-hunting, fishing, shooting and riding, of which he was very fond, and in which he continued to take pleasure as long as he lived. It has been a kind of fashion to represent this great man as one who never unbent, and who took no pleasure in any of the ordinary relaxations and amusements of life. On the contrary, Washington enjoyed not only the field sports which I have mentioned, but also the exercise of a large and somewhat splendid hospitality. Mrs. Washington had her chariot and four, with servants in livery, as the fashion then was, for church-going and ceremonious visiting, and her saddle horses for less important occasions. Washington himself always rode on horseback. Nor was he above caring for the pleasures of those dependent on him. We find him sending to his London

agent, Mr. Cory, a long invoice of various matters needed for the large establishment at Mount Vernon. The list ends with "six little books and ten shillings of toys for Master Custis, six years old," and "a fashionably-dressed baby, worth ten shillings, and ten shillings worth of other toys" for Miss Patty, aged four. I like to think of the arrival of the ship which contained these goods—of the excitement of servants and children, as Washington superintended the unpacking —of the noisy delight of the black people over their respective presents—the ecstasy of the little lady over her doll, and the probably somewhat more restrained and critical approbation of the lady of the house over her "salmon-colored tabby velvet, with satin flowers," and the "cap kerchief, tucker and ruffles of Brussels or point, proper to wear with the same." No doubt, too, the children, both black and white, had reason to rejoice in the pound of barley sugar and the fifteen pounds of rock candy which were included in the same list. Rock candy was then esteemed a sovereign remedy for a cold, and was also often used to sweeten tea and coffee.

It was the usual custom of the Virginia planters to leave their affairs very much to the management of their overseers—a practice which gave rise to much excess and many serious abuses. This was not the way at Mount Vernon. Washington was his own overseer, his own clerk and accountant, and his books and accounts were as neat and methodical as those of any bank. Consequently, he was well served, and his estate became noted for the excellence of its products.

It is said, on good authority, that the West India flour inspectors used to pass without examination the barrels marked with the name of George Washington.

Life at Mount Vernon went on with great regularity. Washington was a very early riser, and was often up before break of day in winter, when he was accustomed to repair to his study, light his own fire and candles, and write or read till breakfast was ready. His own breakfast consisted of tea and hoe cakes. He usually spent his whole morning in visiting his fields and workshops. Dinner was served at two—a fashionably late hour for those days. Washington was a hearty, but by no means a particular eater. He was a great tea-drinker, and consumed unnumbered cups, which, however, were probably very small—not much larger than half a goose egg. He spent the evening with the family, and generally went to bed about nine o'clock. On Sunday the whole family went to church, when the roads and the weather permitted, the ladies riding in the chariot, while Washington accompanied them on horseback. They usually attended Pohick Church, about seven miles away, which had lately been rebuilt, mostly at Washington's expense, and on a plan of his own. Both he and his wife were communicants of the Episcopal Church.

Washington was a kind and thoughtful, but an exact master, never overworking his servants, but tolerating no idleness or carelessness among them. At one time we find him overlooking some negroes who were hewing and squaring timber, and whom he thought somewhat too leisurely in their operations. He sat down

by them, and taking out his watch, he observed how much work they were able to execute while he was looking on, and regulated their future tasks accordingly. At one time we find him working with Peter, the blacksmith, at the model of a newly-contrived plough, which, by the way, did not prove altogether a success. At another time he turned out, with his men, in a furious thunder storm, to strengthen the dam of a mill, which seemed likely to give way, and again we find him chastising, with some vigor, a vagabond duck-shooter and trespasser, who had ventured to raise his gun at him. He spent a good deal of time in field sports, especially in fox-hunting, and kept many horses and dogs, the names of which are entered in his household books with as much care as those of his negroes. Sometimes Mr. and Mrs. Washington visited Annapolis, and took part in the gayeties which abounded during the sittings of the Legislature, and to which, when the roads were bad, the young ladies of the country about used to come "riding on horseback, with their hoops arranged fore and aft, like lateen sails."

Washington had no children of his own, but he was devotedly attached to the children of his wife, and spent much time and pains in the business of their education. He was judge of the county and member of the House of Burgesses, and he never allowed his private affairs to interfere with his attention to public business. He was much interested in a project to drain the Dismal Swamp, a frightful wilderness thirty miles long by ten wide, abounding in wild beasts and poisonous reptiles. In the centre was a pond or lake, six

miles long and three broad. The remainder was covered with heavy forests, quaking bogs and brushwood, overgrown with thorny vines and brambles. Washington explored this wilderness both on foot and on horseback, and came to the conclusion that it might be reclaimed and made fit for the use of man.

In the month of May, 1763, the famous Indian war called Pontiac's conspiracy broke out, and for a time the frontiers were again laid waste. The outstanding settlements were ravaged with fire and sword, a number of small forts were taken, and both Detroit and Fort Pitt were for some time in imminent danger. Pontiac himself was an Ottawa chief, a man of great genius, but he had no materials with which to carry on a regular war. The Indians who joined him quarrelled among themselves. The great Iroquois league refused (it is said by the influence of Sir William Johnson) to join the conspiracy, and at last tranquillity was restored. Those who wish to learn more of this part of American history, will do well to read Mr. Parkman's interesting volume, "The Conspiracy of Pontiac." Washington, not being in any military command, remained quietly at home, busy with his grand project of draining the Dismal Swamp,—a project which he was never to see completed.

But events were brewing which were destined to call our hero's thoughts away from drains and patent ploughs, and all that agricultural business in which his soul delighted. A darker cloud of war was rising in the horizon than that which had just descended on the frontier.

"Thicker and thicker the hot mist grew,
Pierced by the lightning through and through;
And muffled growls, like the growls of a beast,
Ran over the sky from west to east."

I do not propose to write a history of the American war, but a memoir of Washington; nevertheless, it seems necessary to give a sketch of the principal causes which led to the struggle.

The colonies of America, especially those of New England, had small reason to love the mother country; nevertheless they had always shown a great deal of affection and reverence for her, but they were at the same time very jealous of any encroachment upon their rights. They wished to be treated as children—grown-up, indeed, and able to take care of themselves, but still as children, disposed to pay all dutiful regard and obedience to a parent. This feeling had never been returned. England seemed disposed to make them feel all the restraints and burdens while she accorded them none of the privileges of children. She was the hard and unjust stepdame of the fairy tale. In a speech in the English Parliament, Mr. Grenville said that the Americans ought not to object to assist in paying the debts of the English Government, since they were "children of their planting, nourished by their indulgence, and protected by their arms till they had grown up to a good degree of strength and opulence." This fine piece of sentiment brought to his feet Colonel Barrè, always a friend of the colonies. "Children planted by your care!" said he. "No, your oppression planted them in America.

They fled from your tyranny into a then uncultivated land, where they were exposed to all the hardships to which humanity is liable. Nourished by your indulgence! No, they grew by your neglect. When you began to care about them, that care was exercised by sending people to rule over them whose behavior in many cases caused the blood of those sons of liberty to boil within them. *They* protected by your arms! They have nobly taken up arms in your defence; have exerted their valor amidst a constant and laborious industry for the defence of a country the interior of which, while its frontiers were drenched with blood, has yielded up all its little savings to your enlargement."

Nor was Colonel Barrè the only man to plead the cause of America. Lord Chatham and others spoke eloquently in the same strain, but all in vain. Oppressive and vexatious restraints were every day multiplied to embarrass and cripple the commerce of the colonies. They were allowed to send their produce nowhere but to England, to import all sorts of European goods only from England, instead of from the countries where they were produced, and even the trade between America and the mother country was subject to duties. The colonies, particularly Massachusetts and Connecticut, had begun several manufactures, as those of iron, woollen cloths and hats. These were sedulously discouraged and broken down. The colonists were called to endure a host of petty, but constantly-recurring, vexations, not the least of which seems to have been the stupid arrogance and bad manners of the English officials and army officers many

of whom treated the natives of the country—in a large number of cases as well born and better educated than themselves—with undisguised contempt.

"Many people forgive injuries,—nobody forgives contempt," says Franklin, speaking on this very subject, and certainly it requires a good deal of grace to do so. Boston, and the colonies of Massachusetts and Connecticut, being most deeply engaged in commerce, were most exposed to suffer under these petty and contemptible tyrannies, and the fire kindled by them, though still smouldering, communicated its warmth to the other colonies. This was a fact which the English rulers did not understand or believe, till they were forced to do so by "the unanswerable logic of facts."

But the chief vexation of the American colonies was that they were TAXED without being REPRESENTED. It was not, as some English writers have not been ashamed to say, that they were too stingy to pay their share of the expense incurred by the late French and Indian war. They conceived that they had already paid their share, not only by contributing as much money as could reasonably be expected, but by giving their best blood, which had been poured out like water in the cause. It is astounding to read that America during the war raised twenty-five thousand men all at her own expense. Most of the inconvenience of that war fell on America. No Englishman slept the less secure for the fear of a French invasion. But no American colonist at any considerable distance from the great towns could see his children put to bed without fear of their being scalped and murdered be-

fore morning. Hundreds of families perished in this way, and hundreds more were carried into captivity, worse than death. The British Government admitted these facts at the time, though they were so ready to forget them afterward.

From the first year of the existence of the colonies, they had insisted on the principle that they could be taxed only by their own legislators, elected and empowered by themselves. Sir Robert Walpole, one of the most celebrated of British ministers, said "It must be a bolder man than himself, and one less friendly to commerce, who should venture on such an expedient." But the ministers who followed him were not so wise as himself. One piece of oppression followed another. The merchants of Boston and Philadelphia, who were the chief sufferers, remonstrated in temperate and respectful language, and sent Franklin to England to be their agent. They could not have made a better choice. He was then fifty-two years old, a man universally respected at home and abroad, simple in his tastes, courteous and polished in his manners, possessed of an immovable temper, and wit which has seldom or never been surpassed. He had been in England before, and had made many friends while in that country. But all his wit and wisdom were unavailing, as were the remonstrances and appeals of Lord Chatham and other enlightened men. Mr. Grenville, "a man great in daring and little in views," as one of his own contemporaries calls him, was determined to distinguish himself, and he succeeded. In March, 1765, was passed the famous Stamp Act. By

this Act it was provided that no written instrument whatever, no deed, mortgage, note of hand, marriage certificate, will or receipt, could be of any value unless written on stamped paper, to be purchased of British agents appointed for that purpose. What was still worse, any offence against the Act could be tried in any royal marine or admiralty court in any part of the colonies, which was much the same as if an offence against the revenue laws in St. Louis should be tried by a court martial in Maine. Not a young lady could be married,—not an old gentleman could make his will, nor so much as a newspaper could be exposed for sale, without a government stamp. It was certainly an ingeniously-devised tax, inasmuch as it fell upon everybody, from the highest to the lowest. But it remained to be seen whether the collection of the tax would not, as the saying is, "cost more than it came to."

The people of America were not disposed to sit down quietly under such a bold infringement of their liberties. There was an instant stir all over the colonies. It was in the Virginia Assembly that Mr. Patrick Henry made his celebrated speech in which he said very significantly, "Cæsar had his Brutus, Charles the First his Cromwell, and George the Third"—here he was interrupted by cries of "Treason! treason!" He waited a moment, and then added, with flashing eyes, "may profit by their example. If this be treason, make the most of it." The Massachusetts people did not say a great deal, but they thought and acted the more. Agreements were entered into among merchants and their customers not to purchase any goods

of English manufacture. As a part of this plan people left off wearing mourning, and many thousands of pounds' worth of mourning goods were sent back to England as unsalable. Young people who were engaged put off their weddings indefinitely rather than have their wedding certificates written on the hateful stamped paper—a fact which did not tend to make the act more popular. In order to increase the stock of wool, it was agreed that no more lambs should be killed for food. People took a pride in wearing their old clothes over and over again,* and the most elegant ladies appeared at church in homespun. A mob of people hung in effigy Mr. Oliver, the first stamp agent, broke into his house and thoroughly destroyed its contents. A few days afterward they treated the house of Governor Hutchinson in the same way, destroying furniture, pictures and plates, and worst of all, a noble library, and a valuable collection of papers relating to the history of the colonies, which Hutchinson was engaged in writing. Nothing could excuse such senseless violence, and at a town meeting called next day these lawless proceedings were utterly disavowed and strongly condemned by a unanimous vote. The Governor, who was certainly not wanting in courage, then took charge of the stamps himself, but nobody came

* In Franklin's examination before the House of Commons in 1766, this passage occurs:—

Q. "What used to be the pride of the Americans?"

A. "To indulge in the fashions and manufactures of Great Britain."

Q. "What is now their pride?"

A. "To wear their old clothes till they can make new ones."

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to buy. It was the same in other places. Nobody would purchase the stamps even when anybody could be found bold enough to sell them, and business all over the country was almost at a standstill.

Some time before the Stamp Act went into execution the General Court of Massachusetts had sent out letters to the other colonies inviting them to send delegates to a Congress which should assemble at New York in October, 1766. At the appointed time delegates came together from nine colonies. Georgia, North Carolina and Virginia were not represented, not from any want of sympathy with the common cause, but because the invitations came too late to be acted upon by the assemblies of these colonies. A most temperate and respectful address was sent to the king, and a petition to both Houses of Parliament. Franklin, who was in England, was called before the House of Commons, and gave it as his opinion that the people of America would never, under any circumstances, submit to the Stamp Act. He did not see how any military force could be applied to carry the act into execution, because such a force would find nobody under arms. "They cannot force a man to take stamps who chooses to do without them," said he; and added, with somewhat grim significance, "They will not find a rebellion; they may indeed make one!"

At last in 1766 the act was repealed, but so ungraciously and with such reservations, as to make the repeal of very little value, especially as it only made way for other taxes quite as oppressive and vexatious. Above all, the main grievance was left untouched.

"The king is the legislator of the colonies," said Lord Grenville to Doctor Franklin. "The colonies will raise no money but by the acts of their own assemblies," said the Americans. Duties were laid upon glass, paints, pasteboard and tea, which last was coming into very general use. Oppressive powers of search and seizure were put into the hands of naval officers. The colonists were required to furnish the troops sent from England with fire, beds and other necessaries, at their own expense.

Boston was considered the hotbed of sedition, and two royal regiments were sent out from Halifax to overcome the inhabitants of that rebellious town. Commodore Hood's ships transported them, and the Commodore expected great things from their presence. "Had this force been landed in Boston six months ago," he writes, "I am perfectly persuaded no address or remonstrance would have been sent from the other colonies, and that all would have been orderly and quiet throughout America." It is strange to see how thoroughly the English forgot that they had people of English blood to deal with, and English blood with its natural hatred of oppression, strengthened by more than a century of practical independence.

The troops arrived and found anything but a friendly reception. The selectmen refused to find quarters for them; the town council would provide no barracks. It was resolved to quarter some of them in the State-house and others in Faneuil Hall. To make the insult to the colony more conspicuous and exasperating, they marched into the town on Sunday with drums beating

and colors flying and all the noise and parade of war. The people, however provoked, kept themselves quiet within doors, and the men took up their quarters without opposition. Commodore Hood wrote to Grenville that "the worst was past and the spirit of sedition broken."

He never was more mistaken in his life. The volcano was smouldering, and there were plenty of signs to tell any sagacious eye that the eruption was only delayed. The soldiers and their officers were treated with the utmost coldness and neglect. Nobody would buy any English goods. Broken windows were repaired with old paper, and the fine ladies and gentlemen set the fashions of wearing homespun and drinking sage and cider instead of tea and wine. The English merchants began to complain bitterly and to weary Parliament with petitions for the repeal of the obnoxious taxes. Lord North became Prime Minister, and under his administration all the obnoxious taxes were repealed, with the exception of the tax upon tea. This was a fatal exception, since it proved the rule against which the colonies were contending. Let it be always remembered that it was not to paying taxes, as such, that our fathers contended, but against paying taxes imposed without their consent. This was represented again and again, but in vain. Lord North and his master, George the Third, refused to yield. The king, a well-meaning but weak man, was like most weak people, extremely obstinate. He had the notion firmly fixed in his head that to give way to the wishes of the colonies would be to endanger the safety of the whole

realm. "A total repeal cannot be thought of till America is prostrate at our feet," said Lord North, and he really thought he had said a fine thing.

But America was by no means inclined to lie prostrate at the feet of anybody. On the very day the act above mentioned was pressed, a serious scuffle occurred between the military posted in Boston and some young men and boys, in which four persons were killed and several wounded. This occurrence has been called "The Boston Massacre," a name it hardly deserved, since it would seem that the troops only acted in self-defence, but it had very serious consequences. The news flew throughout the country, everywhere increasing the general exasperation. The political sky grew darker and darker. People absolutely refused to touch the taxed tea. The merchants would not buy it, and the East India Company, finding it left on their hands, determined to try exporting it on their own account. They sent large cargoes to Boston, New York, New Jersey and other places, but without success. At New York and Philadelphia such representations were made to the captains of the tea-ships that, like sensible men, they quietly carried their cargoes home again. At Greenwich, New Jersey, where a quantity of tea was landed, the chests were taken out into the fields at night, piled up and burned in the most orderly manner, while the people of the village looked on. At Boston some fifty men, disguised as Indians, went on board the tea-ships, broke up the chests and emptied the tea into the harbor, while the ship's officers looked helplessly on. The work being thoroughly done, the men quietly dis-

persed. Nobody knew who they were, and nobody knows with any certainty to this day.

The destruction of the tea was followed by the passage of the odious Boston Port Bill, for though tea had been refused and destroyed in other places, Boston was considered the prime mover of sedition. This bill in effect put an end at one blow to the whole commerce of Boston. No vessel, unless loaded either with food or fuel, was to remain in the harbor for six hours. All lading and unlading of goods, wares and merchandise was to cease in the harbor after the 4th of June, 1773. Nor was this all. Another act so altered the charter of the province, that all councillors, judges and magistrates were to be appointed by the king, and hold office only at the royal pleasure. Another act provided that any person indicted for murder or other capital offence might be sent to some other colony, or to Great Britain for trial.

The ministry hoped by these extreme and oppressive measures to break the spirit of the Boston people, and also to divide the colonies; but they little understood the people with whom they were dealing. Provisions were sent into Boston from every quarter. The people from Marblehead and Salem offered the use of their wharves and warehouses to the Boston merchants. More significant still was the fact, that the day on which the odious Port Bill was to go into operation was appointed to be observed as a day of fasting and prayer by all the colonies. A second congress was called at New York, of which Peyton Randolph was chosen president. They agreed on a declaration of

right, an address to the king and one to the colonies, and broke up, after a sitting of eight weeks, advising that another congress should be called in the spring.

General Gage meantime had been made Governor, in place of poor Hutchinson. No great things were expected of him by either side. William Smith, the historian, told Mr. Adams that Gage was a good-natured, peaceable, sociable man, but altogether unfit for a Governor of Massachusetts, and predicted that he would dwindle down into a mere scribbling governor—like Bernard or Hutchinson. But Gage was to have very little time for scribbling. He showed at once that he did not understand the people with whom he had to deal. "The Americans will be lions only so long as the English were lambs," said he. And yet Gage had lived long with Americans, and had fought with them on the disastrous field of Braddock's defeat and elsewhere. It seemed as if all the British officials were striken blind and stupid so soon as they had anything to do with American officers. Gage thought he could keep Massachusetts in awe with five regiments; but no force had yet been found able to keep Massachusetts in awe. His very first efforts were met in a way which ought to have convinced him of his error. A paper was at once circulated throughout the province bearing the name of "a solemn league and covenant," and pledging the subscribers to break off all intercourse with Great Britain from the first of August, 1773, till the rights of the colony should be restored; and they also engaged to break off all intercourse with those who would not sign the compact.

General Gage was somewhat startled, and thought it time to begin the awe-inspiring process of which he had spoken. He issued a proclamation denouncing the "solemn league and covenant" as illegal and traitorous, and encamped a force of cavalry and artillery on Boston Common. An alarm that Boston was to be blockaded spread through the country round about, and the inhabitants sent word to the people to stand firm, promising them all sorts of assistance. Gage proceeded to fortify the Neck, as it was called,—the isthmus which connected Boston with the main land—laid violent hands upon arms and ammunition belonging to the province, and sent out various orders, warnings and proclamations, which he might as well have spared. The people went quietly and soberly on their own way, appointing committees of safety and supplies, putting what ammunition remained to them in places of security, raising and drilling troops, and vigilantly watching the motions of the Governor. Powder and ball, and other munitions of war, were constantly smuggled out of Boston in manure carts, in hay-wagons, in the baskets and under the cloaks of market-women, and passed unsuspected under the very noses of the British guard. Ladies of eminence and fashion went to the entertainments of the Governor and his officers, and made much of these occasions to collect intelligence, which they sent to their patriot friends in the city. A great number of patriots left the city, and carried off their valuables with them; others who were not allowed to do so made use of their detention to keep a vigilant eye on the Governor's movements.

The Battle of Lexington. p. 107.

The thunder-cloud of war thickened every day, and on the nineteenth of April, 1775, the first bolt fell. Gage had now about three thousand five hundred men under his command, and he determined to strike a decisive blow. The patriots had accumulated a large quantity of military stores of all kinds at Concord, a town about twenty miles from Boston. General Gage heard of this depot, and determined to destroy it. For this purpose he sent about eight hundred men, under Lieutenant-Colonel Smith and Major Pitcairn. The troops marched at midnight, and every precaution to ensure secrecy was observed, but in vain. Sharp eyes were on them, and sharp ears had caught up a word here and there, which revealed the Governor's purpose. It is said that the signal was given by a lantern hung in the tower of the old North Church, in Boston. Paul Revere and William Dawes were sent across the river to Lexington, with a message to Mr. Adams and Mr. Hancock, and they rode post haste, alarming the sleeping farms and villages as they galloped along. The two patriot gentlemen were lodging in the house of the Rev. Mr. Clarke, and the minute men on guard refused the messengers admission, on the ground that the family could not be disturbed by noise.

"Noise!" said Revere. "You will have noise enough presently. The British are coming."

The alarm was now given in every direction, and the minute men, as they were called, hastened, singly or in groups, toward the field of action. The first skirmish took place at Lexington, eleven miles from Boston. As Major Pitcairn approached the place, the

ringing of bells and beating of drums warned him that his purpose was known. He found about one hundred militiamen assembled on the village green. As the overwhelming force of the British approached, the militia stood still, for they had been ordered not to fire first. The two forces stood at bay, as it were, for a moment. Then Pitcairn and his officers galloped forward, waving their swords and crying out: "Disperse, you villains! Lay down your arms!" Some random shots were fired, nobody knew by whom, and then Pitcairn discharged his pistol, and gave the word "FIRE." A general discharge followed. Three British soldiers and eight Americans were killed. The patriots were dispersed, and took refuge behind walls and buildings, and the British, in high spirits, marched on to Concord. They reached the town about seven o'clock, and entered it in two divisions, and at once proceeded to the work for which they had been sent out. But the people had worked with such expedition in concealing and carrying away the stores, that they found very little to do. They destroyed or disabled three cannon, broke open some barrels of flour and burned two or three barrels of wooden spoons! They also cut down the liberty pole and set the court-house on fire, but the conflagration was promptly arrested by Mrs. Moulton with a few pails of water.

Having disabled the cannon and burned up the spoons of His Majesty's rebellious subjects, Colonel Smith and Major Pitcairn began to think of returning. But this was not to be so easy. The Americans had no notion of obeying the proverb which says that one

should build a golden bridge for a flying enemy. The minute men had flocked in from every side, and every man who owned a gun had it in his hand. Every stone wall, barn and tree covered hosts of enemies—sharpshooters, fighting Indian fashion, every man for his own hand. The regulars were hemmed in on all sides, and shot down without a chance of retaliation by foes who seemed as one of the British officers remarked "to drop from the clouds." An express was sent to General Gage, acquainting him with the state of the case, and Lord Percy, with nine hundred men and two field pieces, was sent out to meet the retreating regulars. He did not come a minute too soon, for the men were utterly worn out, so that an English officer said, "They threw themselves down and panted like dogs." After a few minutes of rest and refreshment, Lord Percy started on his homeward way. The militia still hung upon the British rear, and many men were picked off. The British in return fired barns and dwellings, and killed several non-combatants. The Cambridge bridge had been taken up, and Lord Percy was obliged to take a more circuitous route. At last the weary, enraged and dispirited troops reached Charlestown, and the next day returned to their quarters in Boston. Their loss was sixty-five killed, one hundred and eighty wounded, and twenty-nine prisoners. The Americans had fifty-nine killed, thirty-nine wounded, and five missing. Thus ended the first scene of the war which was to last so many years. The fight was fairly begun.

Meantime Washington was staying quietly at home,

managing his family affairs and doing his duty in the offices to which he had been appointed. He was from the first a thorough-going patriot, sympathizing heartily with the Boston people in their troubles; and he did his best by precept and example, especially by many well-written and weighty letters, to promote non-importation. In 1769 Lord Botetourt, a gentleman of amiable manners and good intentions, came out to Virginia as Governor. He seems to have been as desirous to conciliate as Gage was to conquer by force, but he was to have no better success than Gage himself. The very first time the Legislature of Virginia was convened, the members took up the cause of their suffering brethren in Boston, and sent an address of respectful but decided remonstrance directly to the king. Lord Botetourt dissolved the House the next day. The members repaired to a private dwelling. Washington brought forward articles of association, from which an instrument was drawn up, the signers whereof pledged themselves solemnly to use no articles of British manufacture. The pledge was at once circulated through all the Southern colonies, and strictly adhered to. The Virginia ladies sent for no more salmon-colored tabby velvet or Brussels heads; the gentlemen wore their old clothes, and the little girls must play with rag or corn-cob babies instead of London wax babies dressed in the newest fashions, such as had gladdened the eyes of poor little Patty Custis. The drawing up of this pledge seems to have been the first active step taken by Washington in the cause to which he was to devote the best years of his life. He still kept up his friend-

ship with Lord Botetourt, who seems to have been a candid and sensible man. He examined for himself the causes of difference between the colonies and the mother country, became a strenuous advocate of the repeal of taxes, and meantime endeared himself to every one by his kind and gracious manners. If all English governors had been like his lordship, matters might have turned out very differently.

About this time Washington made an expedition to the Ohio River, for the purpose of exploring the lands which had been granted by Governor Dinwiddie to the soldiers engaged in the last war. It was an arduous journey, and not without danger, for the Indians were by no means peacefully disposed, either among themselves or toward the whites. Nevertheless Washington seems to have enjoyed the journey extremely. He set out in company with his life-long friend, Dr. Craik, and two or three negro servants. They stopped at Fort Pitt, where they found about twenty log houses—the beginning of the present city of Pittsburgh. They visited old Colonel Croghan, a famous Indian trader and fighter, and a comrade of the old French war. Here Washington met with several chiefs of the Iroquois, or Six Nations, with whom he interchanged speeches and civilities of the most elegant and ceremonious character, no doubt. The principal personage presented him with a "speech belt" of wampum, which was accepted with thanks, and the party separated the best of friends. At Fort Pitt the travellers left their horses, and taking a canoe, descended the Ohio as far as the Great Kanawha. Here Washington was vis-

ited by a very old chief, who had been among those who effected the destruction of Braddock's army. The old man declared that he and his young men had fired many times at Washington as he rode about the field of battle, but always without success, from which they concluded that the young soldier bore a charmed life and was under the special protection of the Great Spirit.*

On Washington's return he found that the popular ferments, which had been in some degree allayed by the amiable manners and wise policy of Lord Boutetourt, were again roused to full activity. That nobleman had died of a fever, and was succeeded by Lord Dunmore, a person of a very different stamp. Lord Dunmore began his administration by making a grave mistake. He had been Governor of New York, and when appointed to Virginia he lingered some months amid the gayeties of the city, and sent his secretary, Colonel Foy, to attend to business till he should find it convenient to come himself, appointing him fees and a salary to be paid by the colonists. This was the first offence, and when he himself appeared, the haughtiness of his manners gave great offence to the high-spirited Virginians. The first act of the Assembly was to inquire into the action of the Governor in appropriating to his secretary fees and a salary without consulting them. Lord Dunmore had the sense

* It is a curious fact that recklessly as Washington always exposed himself in battle, he never had a wound, though it is said the superstitious Hessians often shot at him with silver bullets in the hope of wounding him.

to rescind the act, but the Assembly proved so unmanageable that he soon dismissed them to their homes. Again and again the Assembly was prorogued, but at last the Governor was obliged to convene them in 1773. He did not find them any more manageable than before. In this Assembly was proposed the plan of "corresponding committees," whose business it should be to obtain the most clear and authentic intelligence of all such acts and resolutions of the British Parliament or proceedings of administration as may relate to or affect the British colonies, and to maintain with their sister colonies a correspondence and communication. The plan was at once adopted by the other colonies, and was found very useful.

Washington was one of the most active members of the Assembly; nevertheless he continued on good terms with Lord Dunmore, who had the sense to see the value of such a man's friendship. It was even arranged that Washington should accompany Lord Dunmore on a tour through the provinces, especially along the western frontier. But the plan was interrupted by a very sad occurrence. This was the death by consumption of Miss Patty Custis, at the age of seventeen. She had always been rather a delicate girl, and during Washington's absence at the Virginia Assembly she grew suddenly and alarmingly worse. On his return he found her almost in the last stages of the disease. It was a great affliction, for he had no children, and had always cherished those of his wife as his own. Overwhelmed with grief, he knelt by the bedside and offered the most earnest prayer for her recovery. But

it was not to be. Poor little Patty died on the 19th of June, 1773, leaving her mother only one child, John Parke Custis. This youth seems to have given his stepfather some uneasiness, not by any vice, from which he seems to have been remarkably free, but by indulging in somewhat idle and desultory habits, and especially by his ignorance of and indifference to the study of mathematics. It was not long before the youth fell in love with and engaged himself to Miss Barbara Calvert, an amiable young lady, daughter of a gentleman in the neighborhood. There was no objection to the match except the youth of the parties. Washington proposed that young Custis should go to college for a time, and himself took him to New York and placed him at King's (now Columbia) College. But it was all in vain. The young gentleman could not give his mind to his studies; his mother was anxious to see him settled. Washington wisely withdrew his objection, and the young people were married.

Meantime the Boston tea-party had taken place, and the Boston Port Bill carried into effect. As I have said, the day was kept throughout all the colonies as a day of fasting and prayer. Everywhere the bells were tolled, the churches were thrown open, and many sermons were preached. Doubtless, too, many sincere and earnest prayers went up to the God of nations and of armies. Washington has recorded, in his diary, that he went twice to church, and fasted rigidly all day. It is an omen of serious import when men of English race begin their contests by fasting and prayer, as the English rulers might have

remembered, but they seem to have been utterly blinded.

On Monday, the fifteenth of September, 1774, the Congress met at Philadelphia. Washington was present, with his friend Patrick Henry, and other Virginians. "It was a solemn and awful scene," says one who was present. "It is such an assembly as never before came together in any part of the world," wrote John Adams, who was one of the delegates from Massachusetts. "Here is a diversity of religious education, manners, interests, such as would seem impossible to unite in one plan of conduct."

Impossible as it seems, the union took place. "I AM NOT A VIRGINIAN, BUT AN AMERICAN," said Patrick Henry, and the same spirit pervaded the whole assembly. It was moved and seconded that the meetings should be opened every morning with prayer. This was at first objected to, on the ground that the delegates, being of so many different sects, might object to joining in the same form of worship. But the objection was speedily set aside by Mr. Samuel Adams. "He would willingly join in prayer with any gentleman of piety and virtue, whatever might be his cloth, provided he was a friend of his country," he said, and he moved that the Reverend Mr. Duché, a somewhat eminent Episcopal minister, of Philadelphia, might be invited to officiate as chaplain. The motion was carried. The next morning, Mr. Duché appeared and read a part of the morning service with great solemnity. The psalm for the day —the thirty-seventh—appealed to every one, especi-

ally as a rumor had been received that Boston had been cannonaded by the British. Mr. John Adams writes the following description of the scene to his wife:

"You must remember this was the morning of the horrible rumor of the cannonade of Boston. I never saw a greater effect upon the audience. It seemed as if Heaven had ordained that psalm to be read on that morning. After this, Mr. Duché unexpectedly struck out into an extemporary prayer, which filled the bosom of every man present. Episcopalian as he is, Doctor Cooper himself never prayed with such ardor, such earnestness and pathos, and in language so eloquent and sublime, for America, for the Congress, for the province of Massachusetts Bay, and especially for the town of Boston. It has had an excellent effect on everybody here."

An anecdote has been preserved relating to Washington's conduct at this time. A gentleman, who had heard much of him, asked Mr. Secretary Thompson to point him out. Mr. Thompson replied, "You can easily distinguish him when Congress goes to prayers. Mr. Washington is the gentleman who kneels down." This anecdote has been repeated as showing especial devotion in Washington. No doubt his feelings were deeply moved, the more that he was a deeply and earnestly religious man, but doubtless, too, there were others as much so. The simple truth was that most of the gentlemen present were of Congregational and Presbyterian churches, and stood in prayer as they were accustomed to do, while Washington, being an

Episcopalian, assumed the attitude usual in that communion.

Congress remained in session fifty-one days. Washington attended all the sittings, but as the meetings were held with closed doors, we do not know what part was taken by him in the discussions. The papers issued by this Congress have been greatly praised for the statesmanship they exhibited, especially the "Loyal Address to the King." Lord Chatham, in the House of Lords, spoke in the highest terms of their "decency, firmness and wisdom," and declared that he knew no people who could stand in preference to the delegates of the American Congress assembled at Philadelphia.

On the breaking up of Congress, Washington returned home, to busy himself in military preparations for the struggle which he felt to be impending. He had joined in the "Loyal Address," but he put little faith in the power of words, however weighty and well chosen. He believed, with Patrick Henry, that "an appeal to the God of battles was all that was left." He wrote to his brother, who was engaged in raising and disciplining a company, "It is my full intention, if needful, to devote my life and fortune to the cause." He was frequently called upon for advice in military matters, and spent much time during the winter in riding from place to place, to examine and review the numerous independent companies which were formed in different places. General Charles Lee and Major Horatio Gates were both guests at Mount Vernon this winter. They were both Englishmen, and, to some extent, soldiers of fortune. Gates had fought with

Washington on the day of Braddock's defeat, and was a brave soldier, but a somewhat wrong-headed one. Lee had been in the Polish service, and had travelled all over Europe, and was looked upon as a great accession by the patriots. He was slovenly and even dirty in his person, and affected a certain eccentricity and rudeness of manners, which peculiarities, joined to the fact that he had always a legion of dogs at his heels, could not have made him a very agreeable member of the household.

Now came the news that the battle of Lexington had been fought, and that all New England was in arms. The people of Virginia and the Southern colonies were at once aroused, for the cause of one was the cause of all. Nothing was heard but the drum and fife and the echo of patriotic speeches and sentiments of every kind. The colonial poets bestirred themselves, and produced, it must be confessed, some of the worst verses the world has ever seen. Companies were drilling and marching on every hand, and ladies worked night and day weaving cloth, knitting stockings, and making garments for the men. General Gage could not conceive how it was that the other colonies sympathized so strongly with the disturbances in Massachusetts, which he said were none of their business. But the colonies were distinctly of opinion that the business of one was the business of all.

Washington received the news from New England with regret indeed, but without surprise. He had long seen that a fight was inevitable. But he did not

flinch from the sentiments he had already expressed. He wrote to his old friend George Fairfax, then in England:—

"Unhappy it is to reflect that a brother's sword has been sheathed in a brother's breast, and that the once happy and peaceful plains of America are to be either drenched in blood or inherited by slaves. Sad alternative! BUT CAN A VIRTUOUS MAN HESITATE IN HIS CHOICE?"

Fuel was added to the patriotic fire by the news that Ticonderoga and Crown Point, forts on Lake Champlain, famous in the old French war, and well supplied with military stores, had been surprised and taken without a struggle by Ethan Allen and his Green Mountain boys, while Benedict Arnold attacked St. John's, on the Sorel river. Arnold took a king's sloop, well armed, and several other vessels, destroyed others, and hearing that troops were on their way from Montreal, departed with flying colors, carrying off his prizes. These exploits, performed by a few backwoodsmen, under a partisan leader, were not without important results, especially as they opened a way to the Canadian frontier.

The second general Congress met at Philadelphia on the 10th of May, 1775. A union of the different colonies was formed, which was to have the power of making peace or war, of making treaties, and exercising the other powers usually belonging to governments. This was a very important step, and Congress lost no time in using the power committed to its hands for the general good. It ordered the enlistment of

troops, the provision of arms and other necessaries, the building of forts, and the issue of three millions of paper money. Washington was made chairman of all the committees relating to military affairs.

The situation of the little army before Boston was taken into consideration. It was clearly necessary to appoint a commander-in-chief, and all eyes turned towards Washington. Three other candidates were talked of, among whom were General Lee, Mr. Hancock, and General Artemas Ward, already in command. "On the 15th of June," says Mr. Irving, "the army was regularly adopted by Congress, and received the name of the Continental army, while that under General Gage was called the Ministerial army." On the same day Mr. Johnson, of Maryland, nominated George Washington for commander-in-chief. The election was unanimous. The next day the appointment was formally announced to him by the president. Washington showed no false modesty about anything to which he was so clearly called. He rose in his seat and briefly returned thanks for the honor, but added:

"Lest some unlucky event should happen unfavorable to my reputation, I beg it may be remembered by every one in the room that I this day declare, with the utmost sincerity, I do not think myself equal to the command I have been honored with. As to the pay, I beg leave to assure the Congress that as no pecuniary consideration could have tempted me to assume this arduous employment at the expense of my domestic ease and happiness, I do not wish to make a profit of it. I will keep an exact account of

my expenses. These I doubt not they will discharge, and that is all I desire."

On the 20th of June, Washington's commission was delivered to him by Congress. Four major-generals were appointed—Philip Schuyler, of New York; Israel Putnam, of Connecticut; Artemas Ward, of Massachusetts, and General Charles Lee. Major Gates was made adjutant-general, at the express desire of Washington. Mr. Adams objected strongly to the employment of either Lee or Gates; but, nevertheless, voted for them because Washington so earnestly recommended them. We shall see by-and-by how these two gentlemen requited the trust of their commander.

Washington knew what a grief his appointment would be to his wife, and he wrote her most tenderly and kindly on the occasion:

"You may believe me when I assure you, in the most solemn manner, that, so far from seeking this appointment, I have used every endeavor in my power to avoid it, not only from my unwillingness to part from you and the family, but from a consciousness of its being a trust too great for my capacity; and I should enjoy more real happiness in one month with you at home than I have the most distinct prospect of finding abroad if my stay were to be seven times seven years. But as it has been a kind of destiny that has thrown me upon this service, I shall hope that my undertaking it is designed for some good purpose. I shall rely confidently on that Providence which has hitherto preserved and been bountiful to me, not doubting but I shall return safe to you in the fall.

I shall feel no pain from the toil or danger of the campaign; my unhappiness will flow from the uneasiness you will feel from being left alone. I therefore beg you will summon your whole fortitude and pass the time as agreeably as possible. Nothing will give me so much satisfaction as to hear this, and to hear it from your own pen."

To his brother, John Augustine, he writes:

"I am now to bid adieu to you and to every kind of domestic ease for a while. I am embarked on a wide ocean, boundless in its prospect, and on which perhaps no safe harbor is to be found."

These letters, and others written at the same time, show the spirit with which Washington entered on his work. On the 21st of June, the day after he received his appointment, he set out on his journey, in company with Generals Lee and Schuyler, and escorted by a brilliant train of gentlemen from Philadelphia. Twenty miles from the city they were met by a courier bearing to Congress the news of the battle of Bunker's Hill, which had taken place on the 17th of June. Washington eagerly questioned the messenger as to the battle, and particularly as to the behavior of the militia. When he learned with what bravery and steadiness they had behaved under fire, he exclaimed: "The liberties of the country are safe!"

Everywhere on the road Washington met with the greatest attention. At Newark he was met by a committee from New York, appointed to conduct him to the city. The New Yorkers were in a perplexity, which, though serious at the time, seems to us rather

comical. Governor Tryon, the royal Governor, was in the harbor, and was expected to land that same evening. Washington was also expected, and there seemed some danger of an awkward clash in the reception of the two great personages. Finally the difficulty was solved in the following manner: A regiment of militia was turned out, and the colonel was instructed to receive with military honors whichever gentleman should arrive first. Washington happened to be first on the ground, and received the military honors, while Governor Tryon, landing later, was greeted by the Mayor and Common Council, and thus the difficulty was happily got over for the present.

Schuyler was left in command at New York, with orders to keep a wary lookout on all sides, especially on the Governor. Washington himself pushed on to Cambridge. He was everywhere met with distinguished honors. On the 2d of July, 1775, he entered the camp at Cambridge, amid the acclamations of soldiers and citizens and the thunders of cannon, which gave notice to the enemy of his arrival.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ARMY BEFORE BOSTON.

THE battle of Bunker Hill had been fought about two weeks before Washington's arrival. For two or three weeks the city of Boston had been surrounded and pretty closely invested, too, by the provincial troops, much to the vexation of the British officers, who did not fancy being "hemmed in by a rustic rout with calico frocks and fowling-pieces." The English troops were impatient for action, so were the Americans. A council of war was held among the American officers, and it was decided to seize upon Bunker Hill, a height in the rear of the village of Charleston, which commands the city. General Ward was doubtful of the wisdom of the measure, and he was supported by Dr. Warren. On the other side, Putnam and Pomeroy, both veterans of the French war, warmly advocated the measure, and so did Colonel Prescott, another old soldier who had seen service in the affair at Cape Breton and elsewhere. He was a man of great weight and influence in camp, stately and military in appearance, and was, moreover, the only man among the officers who possessed a complete military suit—uniform it could hardly be called, since there was nothing else like it. How much influence the "blue coat,

single breasted, with facings, and lapped up at the skirts," may have had with the council, I cannot say, but it was decided to take possession of Bunker's Hill and Dorchester Heights. The project was hurried forward by secret intelligence that General Gage was intending to take possession of Dorchester Heights on the night of June 18th. Colonel Gridley and other engineers had previously examined the ground about Bunker's Hill, and it was determined that the decision of the council of war should be carried into effect.

A little before sunset on Friday, the 16th of June, 1775, the troops destined for the expedition were assembled on the common, in Cambridge, in front of General Ward's quarters. These were chiefly drawn from the regiments of Prescott, Frye and Bridges, all Massachusetts regiments, with a fatigue party of two hundred from Putnam's Connecticut troops and forty-nine artillerymen—about a thousand in all. They were provided with blankets and food for twenty-four hours, and with such arms as could be mustered, including two field pieces, under the care of Colonel Gridley. Colonel Prescott commanded the expedition, under written orders to fortify Bunker's Hill and defend it until relieved. The men were ignorant of their destination, but were all in the best of spirits. Prayers were offered by the venerable President of Harvard, Dr. Langdon, and the march was begun in silence, about nine in the evening. At Charleston Neck, a very narrow isthmus which connects Charleston with the main land, they were joined by Major Brooks and General Putnam, and here the men were enabled to

guess at their destination by seeing the wagons laden with intrenching tools which were awaiting their arrival.

It was a dangerous march, for the whole ground was zealously watched by the British. The guns of the vessels of war were so disposed as to play upon the peninsula of Charleston from various points, and the guns of one of the vessels swept the isthmus or neck. Had they been discovered, the whole force might have been destroyed, but they passed unobserved and reached the ascent of Bunker's Hill in safety. Then arose a serious question. The orders which Prescott had received named Bunker's Hill as the point to be fortified, but Breed's Hill was nearer to Boston and less exposed to the fire from the ships. A good deal of valuable time was lost in discussion, and Colonel Gridley, the engineer, grew very impatient. At last Breed's Hill was decided on, and the men went to work with great spirit.

Prescott, who was in command, was oppressed with his responsibility. The chances were a hundred to one against the work being carried on undiscovered. He had sent out a party to patrol the shore, and he twice went down himself to make sure of their vigilance. Nothing stirred or gave the alarm. It was a warm, still, starlight night, and he could distinctly hear the cry of the sentry in Boston and the calling of the watch on the ships of war. It was evident that Gates and his officers had no notion of what was going on.

The nights in June are short at best, and valuable time had been wasted in indecision, but by the dawn

of day so much of the work was accomplished as placed the Americans under shelter—a thing much desired by Colonel Prescott, who feared the fire of artillery for his raw recruits. As soon as there was light enough to see, the sailors on the ships of war perceived what was going on, raised the alarm and opened fire on the newly-constructed works. They did no harm to the works, but a man named Asa Pollard, who ventured outside, was killed. He was buried on the spot where he fell. This first death caused a great sensation, and a few men quietly deserted; but the troops soon got over their dread of the cannon balls. To encourage them, Colonel Prescott mounted the ramparts and walked about, inspecting the work and talking cheerfully to the men. He was then seen from Boston, where Gage had at last got his eyes open, and was studying with his glass the fortification, which had grown up since sunset like a pasture mushroom!

"Who is that?" asked Gage.

"That is my brother-in-law, Colonel Prescott," answered Councillor Willard, who was at hand.

"Will he fight?" asked Gage.

"Yes, sir; he is an old soldier, and will fight to the last drop of blood," was the quick reply, "but I cannot answer for his men."

Gage at once decided that the works must be carried, and with his usual contempt for the enemy he had to fight, he decided to land at the foot of the hill and push his way directly up to the breastwork, instead of landing on the Neck, under cover of the fire from the ships, and thus taking the enemy in the rear.

About noon the Americans beheld the troops coming across from Boston in twenty-eight barges, making a splendid show with their brilliant scarlet uniforms and bright bayonets. They landed at Moulton's Point, a little to the north of Breed's Hill. Here it was found that through some mistake all the cannon balls they had brought with them were too large for the guns, and while the blunder was being rectified, General Howe ordered refreshments to be served bountifully to his men. Meantime the Americans were also making use of the delay to strengthen their works and send for reinforcements, which arrived somewhat tardily. Old Stark brought in his New Hampshire men, fresh and ready for action. General Warren had come over, and Prescott offered him the command, but he declined it, and served in the ranks as a volunteer. He was grandfather to Mr. William H. Prescott, the famous American historian, whose books should be in every school library. Warren's example was followed by General Seth Pomeroy. It is said that the General borrowed a horse from General Warren to ride over to Breed's Hill, but on coming to the Neck and observing how the ground was swept by the guns from the Glasgow, he was afraid to risk the safety of the horse; so, leaving the borrowed animal with a sentry, he walked across with a musket on his shoulder and joined the ranks under Prescott's command.

The British knew that they had before them none but raw militia, and they expected an easy victory. They advanced up the hill, having left their field pieces below. The Americans awaited them in silence.

"Don't fire till you see the whites of their eyes, then aim at their waistbands!" were Prescott's orders; "and be sure to pick off the officers." They were obeyed to the letter. Two destructive volleys were poured into the ranks of the enemy, and as almost every American was a sharpshooter, and took deliberate aim, the carnage was dreadful. General Howe, who had attempted to storm another part of the works, met with the same reception. There was a general pause on all sides. Putnam tried to bring up reinforcements, but without much success. The firing at the Neck was terrible, and the raw troops could not at one time be brought to face it. The troops on the hill were in fine spirits at the check they had given to "the regulars;" but some of the old soldiers looked gravely at their small stock of powder and ball and shook their heads. *If* they could obtain supplies all would be well, but it was a terrible *if!*

There was a consultation among the British officers, and it was determined to make another charge, and try to carry the works at the point of the bayonet. It was a fearful scene. The village of Charlestown had been set on fire by shells from the fleet, and was burning furiously. A tremendous cannonade was kept up by the ships and the battery on Copp's Hill, and the discharges of musketry, and the yells of the soldiers on both sides, added to the uproar. "Sure I am, that nothing ever has been or can be more dreadfully terrible than what was to be seen or heard at this time," wrote Burgoyne,—"the most incessant discharge of guns that ever was heard by mortal ears."

In the midst of this tumult, the English made their last charge. This time they reserved their fire till they reached the works, which they assaulted on three sides at once. A fearful hand to hand fight now took place. The Americans had fired away all their ammunition, but they clubbed their muskets, and fought with them in desperation. At last, however, Prescott gave a reluctant order to retire.

The last man to leave the works was Warren, who was shot down in the moment of departure. The Americans retired slowly across the Neck to Cambridge, and the British remained in possession of the ground. It was an undoubted victory, but a terribly dear one. They had been twice repulsed by the men whom they had unsparingly ridiculed as rustics and clodhoppers, and they had lost, out of a detachment of two thousand troops, one thousand and fifty-four, of whom a great number were officers. The Americans had lost four hundred and fifty men all told. They had measured their strength with the best soldiery of Europe, and had held their own far better than would have been expected of undisciplined troops. Such was the battle of Bunker's Hill—the first real battle of the Revolution.

Washington arrived at the camp in Cambridge on the third of July, and immediately reviewed the army. He is said to have taken up his position under a great elm, which is still pointed out as Washington's elm. He was accompanied by General Lee and several officers of distinction, but, as Mrs. Adams tells us, he was himself the centre of attraction to all eyes. He was

now in the very prime of life, being forty-three years old, very tall, well made and muscular, with a handsome face, remarkable for its expression of composure and self-restraint. He was exceedingly dignified, and at times somewhat cold in manner, and it is said that nobody ever ventured to take a liberty with him; but he was universally kind and polite to all alike. A very aged colored woman, who remembered him as a visitor at her master's house, told me that he was remarkable for his kindness to the servants, and for always remembering their names. "Other gentlemen would pass by without a word, but de President—he'd a been President then—he used always to say, 'How's you dis mornin', Katy?' same as if I'd been a lady. But you don't see such gentlemen nowadays. They don't teach young folks manners like they used!" was her conclusion, and I fear it is only too true.

It is quite true that Washington was never too much hurried or embarrassed with business to observe the forms of politeness and respect. There was in Boston at this time a colored girl named Phillis, who was somewhat remarkable for her literary attainments. She belonged to a Mr. Wheatley, who purchased her from a slave-ship when about eight years old. The ladies of the family taught her to read and write, and she soon showed a remarkable taste for study. Not only so, but she wrote very respectable verses, and a volume of her poems was published in London, and much admired. Phillis Wheatley, as she was always called, was an ardent patriot and admirer of Washington, and during his stay in Cambridge she addressed

to him a poem and a letter. Both are unfortunately lost, but we find Washington in the midst of the greatest press of business, just before taking possession of Dorchester Heights, writing a most kind and polite note to the poor little black poetess, apologizing for his delay in noticing her "elegant verses," and signing himself "with great respect, your obedient humble servant."

Washington was received with enthusiasm both by the troops and the inhabitants of the neighboring towns, who crowded to Cambridge to have a look at the hero. As soon as possible, he took a general survey of the camp and army. There were about sixteen thousand men and officers in the camp, almost all drawn from the four New England States of New Hampshire, Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island. General Artemas Ward, a man of great sense and bravery, had the chief command. As might have been expected, the discipline of the army was very imperfect, and it was found difficult to reduce the men to that absolute obedience and subordination which is the very first duty of a soldier. There was a want of almost everything necessary to an army—of tents, of clothes, of ammunition, and, above all, of money. A great difficulty in Washington's way was the sectional jealousy which prevailed among the soldiers. They were unwilling to serve except under their own State officers, and the feeling was continually breaking out in quarrels between the different regiments. Another trouble was the short terms for which the men were enlisted, and this continued to be a stumbling-block to

the end of the war. The raw recruits were no sooner made into soldiers than they were ready to go home. Absurd as it may seem, while the army was struggling for mere existence, when no more than three thousand troops could be raised for love or money, and at least half of that number were bare-footed, half-naked, or sick with the small-pox, there were plenty of people, in Congress and out, to talk of the dangers of a standing army, and hint, in plain terms, that Washington meant to make use of his ragged regiments to make himself king.

Washington at once set himself to work to rectify disorders and introduce discipline as soon as possible. He issued a general order, in which he begged the men, as they were now all soldiers of the Continental Army, to lay aside all distinctions of colony or province, "so that one and the same spirit shall animate the whole, and the only contest shall be, who shall render, on this great and trying occasion, the most essential service to the great and common cause in which we are all engaged." The order goes on to recommend the enforcement of discipline and obedience, and concludes with these words:

"The General does most earnestly require and expect a due observance of those articles of war established for the government of the army which forbid cursing, profane swearing and drunkenness. And in like manner he requires and expects of all officers and soldiers not on actual duty a punctual attendance on divine service, to implore the blessing of Heaven on the means used for our safety and defence."

"Orders conceived in the same spirit, and inculcating the same sentiments, were often repeated," says Mr. Sparks, "and it is an interesting fact that, through the channel of his daily orders, Washington did not strive more earnestly to secure the discipline than to strengthen the patriotism and improve the morals of his officers."

One of Washington's most painful duties was that of approving the sentence which a court-martial had lately passed upon Captain Callender. This unhappy man had disgraced himself, and endangered others, by behaving with cowardice at the battle of Bunker Hill. There was no doubt of his guilt, and he was cashiered. Many, perhaps most, young men under similar circumstances would have given up everything and gone to utter destruction. Not so Callender. He obtained leave to rejoin his corps as a volunteer, and from that time was distinguished for his desperate and reckless bravery. At the battle of Long Island, when the captain and lieutenant of his company were both killed, he assumed the command, and fought his pieces to the last moment. He was under the very bayonets of the enemy, when a British officer, who had seen and admired his courage, interfered and saved his life. Callender continued in the army to the end of the war. He left it without a stain upon his honor, and Washington erased his sentence from the orderly-book with his own hand. Such a story carries its own moral.

The American troops were distributed in a kind of irregular semicircle, about nine miles in extent, hem-

ming in the city of Boston. They had thrown up fortifications with great cleverness, considering their inexperience, and had made themselves shelters as best they might, some with huts of boards, others of mud and stone debris, or of boughs and withes woven together. The Rhode Island troops alone had regular marqués pitched in military style. They were under the command of General Greene, and were remarkable for their numbers and good discipline. Nathaniel Greene was the son of an anchorsmith, in Rhode Island, who was also an eminent preacher in the Society of Friends, but the young man took to fighting as naturally as a duck to the water, and was one of the best and most reliable general officers in the army.

Amongst the worst provided troops were those belonging to the colony of Massachusetts. They were in want of almost everything which a soldier should have, and some of the Southern commanders were disposed to look down on them in consequence. But Washington understood the matter better. He apologized for them on the ground of the oppression which Massachusetts had already suffered. "Their deficiency in numbers, discipline and stores," said he, "can only lead to the conclusion that their spirit has exceeded their strength."

Meantime, the city of Boston was in anything but a comfortable condition. The principal commanders under Gage were the Hon. William Howe, General Henry Clinton and General Burgoyne. Howe was brother to that Lord Howe who died on the banks of Lake George in Wolfe's famous campaign. He had

been greatly beloved by the Americans, who grieved to see his brother engaged against them. General Clinton was the son of that George Clinton who was governor of the province of New York for ten years. General Burgoyne was a young man hitherto more distinguished as a man of fashion and an author, in a small, genteel way, than as a soldier. His literary works are certainly not remarkable for talent, and some anecdotes remaining of him give no very exalted notion of his principles or feelings. He was not destined to win any very brilliant laurels in America in any direction.

Under these commanders were about eleven thousand veteran soldiers, thoroughly disciplined and provided with everything necessary for an army, except forage and fresh provisions—two very important articles, which they could not obtain at any price. There were in the city a great number of Loyalists, as they called themselves, or Tories, as their countrymen called them, who had hitherto been residents, or who had fled to the British camp for protection. There were also many patriotic Americans who had been either unable or unwilling to escape. The situation of these last was pitiable in the extreme, as they were treated with every species of ignominy and oppression. The enemy seemed to take pleasure in insulting them. Sometimes their insults were returned in kind, as when the British turned the South Church into a riding-school and burned the North Church for fuel, in revenge for which the troops in Cambridge destroyed the Episcopal church and melted the organ pipes into bullets.

The last might, perhaps, have been excused on the score of necessity, as lead was a very scarce article. General Burgoyne lived in Mrs. Quincey's fine house, and a lady who resided opposite saw the handsome mahogany tables used as butchers' blocks to chop raw meat upon, and the other furniture used accordingly. Nobody could buy a bit of fresh meat or fish till the army was supplied. There was a great deal of sickness, especially among the prisoners, and many of the wounded on both sides died for want of proper care and food.

Washington took up his headquarters in the fine old house now belonging to Professor Longfellow, and there he lived during the whole campaign, being joined after a time by Mrs. Washington. He addressed himself with his usual earnestness to the task before him, of soothing discontents, arranging the troops, so that they might the better support each other in case of attack, providing clothes and shelter for the men, and attending to all those perplexing and vexatious minutiæ which, far more than fighting, make up the hard work of a commander. He received valuable assistance from General Lee and General Gates, both experienced soldiers, and from General Putnam, who had great influence both with the younger officers and the men. The somewhat disorderly camp was soon reduced to order; new entrenchments thrown up and old ones strengthened. A number of rifle companies came in from Pennsylvania, Virginia and Maryland,—picked marksmen, every one of whom could *bark off* a squirrel or hit a buck in the eye. One of these

companies was commanded by Daniel Morgan, who had learned his first lesson in war on the day of Braddock's defeat. They were a valuable and welcome addition to the little army.

About this time Congress appointed a day of fasting and prayer for the success of the American cause. Lee, who, like many weak-minded people, thought it manly to make a display of unbelief, scoffed at the notion, declaring that Providence was always on the side of the strongest battalions. Washington took a different view of the matter. By his orders all but the most necessary labor was suspended on that day, and both officers and men were required to attend divine service, and the Commander-in-chief himself set the example.

Washington's great object now was to drive the British out of Boston. Already they were reduced to great straits. Not a foraging party could sally out to any of the towns or islands in the bay for hay or cattle, but three or four whale-boats would come gliding out upon them from unsuspected nooks and corners like so many water-spiders, and it generally happened that those who came to shear went home shorn. It is pleasant to know that the English prisoners taken in these expeditions were usually treated with great humanity by the Americans. There was a great deal of sickness among the English troops, and many died, while all were becoming dispirited and discontented at being shut up in such close and uncomfortable quarters. Washington was desirous of bringing on a general action, and all things seemed to favor his plans, when the alarming discovery was made that

the whole amount of powder in the American camp amounted to only thirty-two barrels—enough to furnish nine cartridges to each man, and no more.

This was a terrible blow. For the moment it seemed as if all was over. Should the enemy gain intelligence of their destitute condition, than which nothing was more probable, they would undoubtedly choose that time for an attack. But Washington never gave way for a day nor an hour. He sent in every direction to gather together all the ammunition to be found in the country, and in the meantime continued to show a bold face to the enemy. This state of things lasted for more than two weeks, when a small supply of powder from New Jersey relieved the present distress. Some days afterward, a long train of wagons laden with powder, shot and shells, and adorned with green boughs and flowers, entered the American camp. This was the lading of a large brigantine, captured by Captain Manley in the schooner Lee, which had been sent out by Washington to cruise along the coast. The little vessel rendered much efficient service, and might be said to be almost the beginning of the American navy.

Washington had not only the cares of the siege on his hands, but much of his attention was occupied with other matters. The towns all along the coast were exposed to the attacks of the British vessels, and were absolutely defenceless. Falmouth (now Portland), in Maine, was one of the chief sufferers, and was burned to the ground in the most wanton and cruel manner. The inhabitants of these towns were

of course kept in the most dreadful state of suspense and alarm, and constantly sent requests to Washington for vessels and troops to defend them—requests which he was obliged to refuse, though it wrung his heart to do so. But the force before Boston was far too small already for the work it had to do, and it would have been madness to reduce it further.

An occurrence which happened about the same time as the burning of Falmouth produced universal indignation and alarm. A woman was caught coming from Cambridge with a letter for Captain Wallace, a man who had distinguished himself as a marauder on the American coast. General Putnam, or "Old Put," as he was called, even by the ceremonious Washington himself, pounced upon the messenger, and, to lose no time, took her up on horseback behind him and carried her at once to headquarters. Washington happened to be looking out of the window at the moment, and the spectacle of the stout old general approaching at a gallop, with a still fatter old woman trussed up behind him, and holding on for dear life, overcame the commander's habitual gravity, and he laughed heartily, for almost the only time during the campaign. He soon recovered his composure, however, and the poor woman was subjected to a severe and searching examination. With much reluctance she at last admitted that the author of the letter was Dr. Benjamin Church, the Surgeon-General—a man as fully trusted and as much respected as any man in the army. The letter was in cipher, but being interpreted, proved to be a minute description of the situation and condition

"Old Put" and his captive. p. 140

of the army. Church was called to account, and endeavored to defend himself, but succeeded very lamely; in fact, no defence was possible. He was kept in very close imprisonment for a time and severely watched, but at last he was permitted to leave the country. He set sail for the West Indies, and is believed to have perished at sea.

Besides all these troublesome affairs at home was the miscarriage of the first expedition to Canada. A force had been sent by way of Lake George and Lake Champlain, and another by the way of the Kennebec River under Benedict Arnold. Those who wish can read an interesting and particular account of the whole expedition in Mr. Irving's "Life of Washington." I can only say here that although there were some successes, such as the taking of Chamblee and Montreal, the affair in general was a disastrous failure. The different parts of the expedition did not come together. The commanders quarrelled about precedence, and the men grew dispirited and home-sick. The Canadians were not found ready to rise and join the invaders as had been expected. General Montgomery was killed before Quebec, as Wolf and Montcalm had been killed before him. Many of the men were killed and more taken prisoners, and at last the project was abandoned.

Late in the fall, Mrs. Washington arrived in camp. Her situation at Mount Vernon had been a lonely and at times a dangerous one, as Lord Dunmore was threatening great things in Virginia, and in case he should put them into execution, Mount Vernon would probably be destroyed. Lund Washington, a distant

relation of the General's, was his agent there, and seems to have been as faithful as he was trusted. We find Washington writing to him as follows:

"Let the hospitality of the house with respect to the poor be kept up. Let no one go hungry away. If any of this kind of people should be in want of corn, supply their necessities, provided it does not encourage them to idleness, and I have no objection to your giving away my money to the amount of forty or fifty pounds a year where you think it well bestowed. What I mean by having no objection is, that it is my desire it should be done. You are to consider that neither myself nor my wife are now in the way of these good offices."

Mrs. Washington travelled with her own carriage and horses, and accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Custis. Her journey was quite a triumphal progress from the attentions she received. Her presence at headquarters relieved Washington of a good deal of embarrassment regarding the matter of entertaining company. The household soon fell into regular ways. The General always maintained prayers morning and evening. There was a great deal of dinner company and some ceremonious parties. Other people also gave parties, especially Adjutant-General Mifflin, at whose house Mr. Adams dined, in company with General and Mrs. Washington and a number of Indian chiefs, and was surprised to find the latter personages such fine gentlemen. Here also Mrs. Adams met General Lee and was introduced to his dog Spot, who seems to have been something more civilized than himself.

But these were only episodes. The winter wore on under constant anxieties and vexations, but without any material action on either side. The great standing trouble was the matter of short enlistments. On the first of January, 1776, the army was composed of ten thousand men, at least half of whom were militia whose term of service had almost expired. Some Connecticut men had already gone home, but they met with such a cold, or more correctly speaking, with such a warm reception, especially from the women, that they were glad to return. Then there were the old sectional jealousies breaking out every now and then. Mr. Irving gives the following story from the memoir of an eye-witness:

"A large party of Virginia riflemen who had recently arrived in camp, were strolling about Cambridge and viewing the collegiate buildings. Their half Indian equipments and fringed and ruffled hunting garbs provoked the merriment of some troops from Marblehead, chiefly fishermen and sailors, who thought nothing equal to the round jacket and trousers. A bantering ensued between them. There was snow on the ground, and snow-balls began to fly where jokes were wanting. The parties waxed warm with the contest. They closed and came to blows, both sides were reinforced, and in a little while at least a thousand were at fisticuffs, and there was a tumult in the camp worthy of the days of Homer. At this juncture Washington made his appearance, whether by accident or design I never knew. I saw none of his aids with him; his black servant was just behind him mounted.

He threw the bridle of his own horse into his servant's hands, sprang from his seat, rushed into the thickest of the melee, seized two tall, brawny riflemen by the throat, talking to and shaking them. His appearance and strong-handed rebuke put an instant end to the tumult. The combatants dispersed in all directions, and in three minutes none remained on the ground but the two he had collared. Here bloodshed, imprisonments, trial by court-martial, revengeful feelings between the different corps of the army, were happily prevented by the physical and mental energies of a single person, and the only damage resulting from the fierce encounter was a few torn hunting-shirts and round jackets."

About the first of January Washington wrote to his friend and secretary, Mr. Reed:

"For more than two months I have scarcely emerged from one difficulty before entering another. How it will end, God in his great goodness will direct. I am thankful for His protection to this time. If I shall be able to get through this and many other difficulties, I shall most sincerely believe that the finger of Providence is in it, to blind the eyes of our enemies; for if we get through this month, it must be for want of their knowing the disadvantages we labor under."

They were destined to "get through," and to prove the falsity of Lee's saying, that Providence was always on the side of the strongest battalions. The time went on slowly without any marked event on either side. General Putnam, always ready for a fight or a frolic, one night made a raid into Charlestown, burned a

guard-house, took several prisoners, and retreated without loss. At the very time a piece was being acted in officers' theatre, in which Washington was represented "as an awkward lout, equipped with a huge wig and a rusty sword, attended by a country booby as orderly, with an old firelook seven or eight feet long." The appearance of a sergeant to give the alarm was at first thought a part of the performance, but when General Howe gave the word, "Officers, to your alarm posts!" there was a grand confusion. Ladies screamed and fainted, people crowded out of the theatre without ceremony, and there was an end of the entertainment. Mr. Burgoyne had the credit of writing the piece to which "Old Put" furnished such an unexpected conclusion.

Neither this untoward event nor the increasing scarcity and sickness prevented the British officers from indulging in all the gayeties within their reach. The distress of both citizens and soldiers was becoming dreadful. Several houses were demolished and used by the soldiers for fuel, and others were broken open and plundered, despite the efforts of the General. Still the British officers played cards and made parties, and the General gave entertainments which the Tory ladies attended, and from which the Whig ladies stayed away. In the American camp, on the contrary, all was seriousness and sobriety. In a general order, issued on the twenty-sixth of February, Washington forbade all playing at cards or other games of chance. "At this time of public distress," (so runs the order,) "men may find enough to do without abandoning themselves to vice and immorality."

A great undertaking was now in progress, nothing less than the taking possession of Dorchester heights. Washington was now well supplied with guns and ammunition, and he felt that the time was come for a decisive step. On Monday evening, the fourth of March, 1776, General Thomas set out with his detachment. A covering party of eight hundred men came first, then the entrenching tools, then the working party with three hundred wagons, laden with all sorts of materials for the proposed works, among which were a great number of bundles of pressed hay. To divert the attention of the enemy, a tremendous cannonade was kept up from various points. It was replied to with spirit, and such was the noise and uproar that though it was a bright moonlight night, the detachment reached the heights wholly undiscovered. Here all set to work with a will. The ground was frozen hard, and the cold was very severe, but the men worked with spirit, and were animated by the presence of General Washington, who could not remain away from a post of so much interest and danger. Everybody in the neighborhood was kept awake by the thunder of the guns and the bursting of the shells. It was a dreadful time for those who had friends in Boston.

Meantime, the British had no notion of what was going on. The night before, an English officer wrote to his friends at home:—

"For the last six weeks we have been better amused than could possibly be expected in our situation. We had a theatre, we had balls, and there is actually a

subscription on foot for a masquerade. England seems to have forgotten us, and we have endeavored to forget ourselves."

The masquerade was not destined to take place. When the day dawned, the British officers were utterly astounded to see a strong fortification erected on Dorchester heights, so as to command the city and the shipping in the harbor. Howe could not believe his own eyes. "The rebels have done more work in one night than my army would have done in a month," said he. He saw in a moment the advantage which the Americans had gained, and was most bitterly annoyed and perplexed. One of two things he saw must be done—either the enemy must be dislodged or Boston must be evacuated. The latter alternative was too humiliating to be thought of. He determined to make a night attack on the works at Dorchester. Had he done so, General Putnam stood ready to make a diversion by attacking the city from the other side. But a stronger power than that under "Old Put" was ready to withstand him. In the evening the English forces set out, led by Lord Percy, the same who had

> "Fought for King George at Lexington,
> A major of dragoons."

The gathering place was to be Castle William, and a large number of men were already on board the transports, when a violent storm arose from the east. It was impossible for the boats to land, and the attack was put off till next day. But next day the storm was worse than ever, and the attack was again postponed. Meantime, the Americans were busied in

strengthening and perfecting their works, and by the time the storm was over General Howe deemed them too strong to be carried. The shells thrown into the town and harbor showed that the place was no longer tenable, and in a council of war it was determined to evacuate Boston.

But even here was a great difficulty. The troops could not embark without being exposed to a terrible fire from the new fort. General Howe endeavored to obviate this difficulty by working on the fears of the citizens by terrifying hints. He might be obliged to cover his retreat by setting fire to the city. The "select men" were alarmed, and sent a paper to Washington begging "that such a dreadful calamity should not be brought about by any means from without."

The paper was not signed, nor was there any assurance that Howe would not carry his threat into execution, at all events, so that Washington could not properly take any notice of the document. However, the Americans suspended their fire for the present, though they continued to strengthen their works. They also attempted, but unsuccessfully, to erect another fort on Nook's Hill. The cannonading began again, and the wretched people of Boston passed another night of dreadful suspense and alarm.

Indeed, the whole city was in a terrible state of confusion. Not only were the British troops preparing to embark, but most of the Tories who had sided with them, and who had good reason to dread the arrival of their countrymen, were preparing to be

gone also. The inhabitants, without distinction of party, were ordered to give up all linen and woollen goods, and everything else which could be of any comfort to the enemy. This order was made the pretext for all sorts of robbery and outrage, which Howe vainly endeavored to repress by threatening to hang the first soldier caught in the act of plundering. Houses and stores were broken open, pictures and books defaced, and furniture destroyed in mere wanton mischief. The Tories contrived to get their own goods on board the transports, and to crowd out the king's stores. Guns were disabled and thrown into the harbor, and the whole of the hospital and surgeon's stores were left behind. The officers did their best to maintain order, but, by their own account, the whole affair was more like a disgraceful retreat than an orderly evacuation. Meantime the Americans looked on without firing a shot. By ten o'clock on the seventeenth of March the British were embarked and under way, and General Putnam had raised the American flag and taken command of the city. The siege of Boston was at an end. The "troop of rustics, in calico frocks and fowling-pieces," had fairly outgeneraled and driven away Lord Howe and his army of veterans. The British fleet remained for some days in Nantasket roads, but, at last they set sail and disappeared from the coast.

Such was the conclusion of the revolutionary campaign. Washington received a vote of thanks, and a gold medal was cast in commemoration of the evacuation of Boston. The British Government had lost

many men, much time, and a million or more of pounds in money, not to mention a good deal of reputation, by which expenditure they had succeeded in convincing the most loyal of the American patriots that a Declaration of Independence had become an absolute necessity.

CHAPTER VIII.

WASHINGTON'S ARRIVAL AT NEW YORK—CONDITION OF THE CITY—THE JOHNSONS.

IT was the opinion of Washington that, after leaving Boston, Howe would steer directly for New York. He was, however, mistaken. General Howe went to Halifax, to wait for the fleet of his brother, Admiral Lord Howe, who had been appointed commander-in-chief of the naval forces on the North American station. Washington, however, hastened on to New York the detachments of Sullivan and Heath, and wrote to Connecticut for three thousand men. He gave the command of the whole to Putnam, who was to follow the plans begun by General Lee in fortifying the city and the passes of the Hudson. He delayed to come on himself till he should have sent forward his main army.

Lee, who seems always to have been firmly persuaded that he alone of all American generals was fitted for a responsible command, had expected that after his departure, there would be great confusion, but Putnam showed himself eminently the right man for his place.

He put the city under military rule. The soldiers went to their barracks when the tattoo beat, and re-

mained there till the *reveille* in the morning. The citizens obeyed the same rule, and none were allowed to pass the sentries without the countersign, which they could receive only from the brigade majors. All communication between the shore and the "ministerial fleet" was cut off, and the people were not allowed to furnish provisions to the ships. Any person taken in the act of intercourse, was to be held as an enemy and treated accordingly. The people of New York were of varied origin. The descendants of the old Dutch and Huguenot families were among those who were the firmest in the American cause. Others were of Scotch and English descent, and among these were many favorers of the crown. Between the two extremes might be found every shade of opinion. The Tory party in the city was strong, and could be held in check only by vigorous measures. Putnam, however, while he governed strictly, showed neither arrogance nor insolence to the loyal party, and he protected the persons and property of those who remained neutral.

Putnam has been described by a contemporary "as one fitter to head a band of sicklemen or clothiers than musketeers." This gentlemen, however, could see apparently no virtue in any man who did not wear fine clothes, or come up to the standard of what he was pleased to call "gentility."

Though the gallant old gentleman did wear "a waistcoat without sleeves," he proved himself, as Irving says, "eminently a soldier for the occasion," acting, in his difficult command, with firmness and wisdom.

A letter written at the time gives a graphic picture

of the state of the city. "When you are informed that New York is deserted by its old inhabitants, and filled with soldiers from New England, Philadelphia and Jersey, you will naturally conclude that the environs of it are not very safe from so undisciplined a multitude as our provincials are represented to be; but I do believe there are very few instances of so great a number of men together with so little mischief done by them. They have all the simplicity of ploughmen in their manners, and seem quite strangers to the vices of older soldiers. They have been employed in erecting fortifications in every part of the town. Governor Tryon loses his credit with the people here prodigiously. He has lately issued a proclamation, desiring the deluded people of this colony to return to their obedience, promising a speedy support to the friends of the Government, declaring a door of mercy open to the penitent, and a rod for the disobedient. The friends of the Government were provoked at being so distinguished, and the friends of liberty hung him in effigy, and printed a dying speech for him. A letter, too, was intercepted from him, hastening Lord Howe to New York, as the rebels were fortifying. These have entirely lost him the good will of the people. You cannot think how sorry I am the Governor has so lost himself—a man once so beloved! General Washington is expected hourly. General Putnam is here, with several of the young generals and some of their ladies. The variety of reports keeps one's mind always in agitation."

Washington came by way of Providence, Norwich,

and New London, and arrived at New York on the 13th of April.

He found that the fortifications begun by Lee had been in many parts completed, and that others were in progress. It was supposed that the first attack of the British would be made on Long Island, and there Washington placed General Greene in command. The forces distributed about New York and on Long Island, Staten Island, and elsewhere, were little more than ten thousand. Leaving out the sick, and others unfit for duty, with those who were absent on furlough, there were not more than eight thousand available for active service. They had not been paid. They had not been half provided with arms, and no one seemed to know where arms were to be procured.

Washington was full of anxiety. He knew that he was surrounded by the friends and emissaries of Great Britain, and he dreaded treachery. The ships of war had fallen down into the outer bay, within the Hook. They were twenty miles from the city, but Tryon was on board, and, in spite of all precautions, he kept up a correspondence with the Tories in the city and in the country round about.

Washington had more influence with the Committee of Safety than the arrogant and impatient Lee, and in addition to the order issued by Putnam to the city, he procured the passage of a resolution forbidding, under severe penalties, all intercourse with the ships.

In addition to all his other cares, the news from Canada continued to be discouraging, and both Congress and the northern generals were urging him to

send reinforcements from the slender force about New York. Ten regiments and a company of artificers were sent to join Thomas under Thompson and Sullivan, and still Congress was inquiring whether more could not be spared.

The reply shows the worry and perplexity of mind to which Washington was subjected, not knowing where the next blow would fall.

"I could wish, indeed, that the army in Canada should be more powerfully reinforced. At the same time I am conscious that the trusting this important post, which is now become the grand magazine of America, to the handful of men remaining here, is running too great a risk. The securing of this post and Hudson's river is to us also of so great importance, that I cannot at present advise the sending of any more troops from hence, especially when it is considered that from this place only the army in Canada must draw its supplies of ammunition, provisions, and most probably of men."

"The designs of the enemy," he says, "are too much behind the curtain for me to form any accurate opinion of their plan of operations for the summer's campaign, and we are left to wander in the field of conjecture."

There had been "vague rumors of Hessian and Hanoverian troops coming over;" but it was not until a later date that Washington learned to a certainty that Great Britain had been literally buying up men to assist in ruining her colonies.

Besides the great subsidy exacted by the German princes, who thus disposed of their subjects, they were

to be paid seven pounds four shillings and four pence for every soldier, and as much more for every one killed.*

At Washington's headquarters, he himself, his secretaries and aid-de-camps were kept at work from morning till night "hearing and answering letters and applications."

"I give in to no kind of amusement," he writes, "and consequently those about me can have none."

Mrs. Washington presided over the domestic arrangements with her usual simplicity and dignity. The wives of some of the general officers united in forming a little society among themselves, but there was almost no social intercourse.

"We all live like nuns shut up in a nunnery," writes a lady of New York. "No society with the town, for there are none there to visit; neither can we go in or out after a certain hour without the countersign."

Washington sent General Gates to Philadelphia to acquaint Congress with the situation of affairs in Canada, and hardly had his messenger departed, before he himself was called for by the same body.

* These contracts excited great indignation in England as well as in America. A satirical piece, believed to have been written by Franklin, appeared after the battles of Trenton and Princeton. It purported to come from the Count de Schaumburg to the commander of the Hessians, congratulating him on the number of men he had succeeded in getting killed. The piece is wrtiten with great wit and humor. It may be read on page 395, vol. II., of Bigelow's recent life of Franklin. It is amusing to find this *jeu d'esprit* quoted as a genuine letter from the Prince of Hesse-Cassel in a valuable historical work.

He left New York, in company with his wife, on the 21st of May, leaving Putnam in command of the city, with careful instructions. The Provincial Congress had determined to seize the principal Tories, especially upon Long Island, and Putnam was authorized to afford aid if necessary. Stirling, Colonel Putnam and Knox, if he could be spared, were to examine the forts in the Highlands, and report what was wanting to their state of defence.

Lee was glad to hear of Washington's visit to Philadelphia.

"I am extremely glad, dear general," writes he, "that you are in Philadelphia, for their councils sometimes lack a little of military electricity."

Washington seems to have done his best to infuse the desired "electricity," and was in some degree successful. He writes to his brother, on the 31st of May, that he is firmly convinced that no justice is to be had from Great Britain, and that all their talk of commissions was only meant to deceive the Americans and throw them off their guard. "The first," he says, "has been too effectually accomplished, as many members of Congress, in short the representatives of whole provinces, are still feeding themselves upon the dainty food of reconciliation. . . . It is obvious that it is a clog to their proceedings." He commends the wisdom of the Virginia convention in removing the disaffected from Princess Anne and Norfolk counties, and for turning their attention to the manufacture of salt, saltpetre and powder.

Washington openly expressed his conviction that no

agreement could be effected with Great Britain. The ministerial party had declared in Parliament that "the most coercive measures would be persevered in until there was complete submission." The purchase of the German troops showed that nothing short of war was to be expected, and it was hopeless to try to carry on a struggle with such a power as England with the present scanty forces and the wretched system of short enlistments.

Congress passed a resolution that men should be enlisted for three years, with a bounty of ten dollars for each recruit; that until the 1st of December the army should be augmented with thirteen thousand eight hundred militia; that fire-rafts should be built to keep the hostile ships from coming into the Bay or the Narrows; and that a "flying-camp" of ten thousand militia, from Delaware, Maryland and Pennsylvania, should be placed in New Jersey for the protection of the middle colonies.

Washington was also given power to call on the neighboring colonies for temporary aid with the militia. The most important measure, however, was the creation of a permanent "Board of War and Ordnance," which was to take charge of military affairs. Hitherto matters relating to the conduct of the war had been left to the committees casually appointed, under which system there had been great confusion and neglect.

Mrs. Washington, while in Philadelphia, took the opportunity of being inoculated for the small-pox, to the great relief of her husband, who had always been afraid of her taking the disease in the natural way.

She passed through the illness favorably, and was not at all disfigured.

Washington returned to New York in the first week in June, while a new cloud of war was rising in the West.

The Indians of the Six Nations were said to be holding councils with the Johnsons, noted Tories, who lived on the Mohawk, and the fear was that they would lay waste the whole Mohawk Valley and the country about Albany.

The Johnson family were destined to play a prominent part in the Revolution. The founder of the family in America was Colonel William Johnson, an Irishman, who came to this country in 1734 to manage the estates of his uncle, Commodore Sir Peter Warren, in the Mohawk Valley. He was engaged in several actions during the French and Indian wars, and always with credit to himself, and his services were rewarded with the title of baronet and a present of five thousand pounds from the House of Commons.

Sir William appears to have used his influence with the Indians mostly for good. He was his Majesty's general agent for Indian affairs, and had obtained his office by the influence of the Schuylers. In the disputes between England and the colonies, though he had remained faithful to the king, he had watched with sorrow and anxiety the series of acts by which the once devoted provinces had been driven to arms.

While thus distressed and perplexed, he received orders to enlist the savages in the cause of the king. It is conjectured that the distress and perplexity into

which he was thrown by these orders brought on the apoplectic stroke of which he died, on the 11th of July, 1774.

His son, Sir John Johnson, and his son-in-law, Guy Johnson, and Colonel Claus, felt none of the scruples of Sir William. The Johnsons lived in a sort of feudal state, surrounded by their retainers—many of them Scotch Highlanders, of the Roman Catholic persuasion; others half-breeds and vagabond Indians, and violent and lawless persons like Brant and the Butlers.

His influence with the Indians had made him a dangerous enemy. Great numbers of the Indians took up arms. The Oneida nation alone remained faithful—kept so, in a great measure, by the exertions of Rev. Mr. Kirkland, a missionary, and by the influence of another white man, Mr. James Dean, who had been brought up among the Indians, and whom they had sent to school and to college at their own expense, and who always continued their faithful friend and protector.*

* While the Indians were yet undecided whether to take up arms with Johnson or remain neutral, Mr. Dean and some of the Oneida chiefs went on an embassy to some of the Canada Indians, with whom they were allied, hoping to prevent their joining with the British. Mr. Dean was dark as an Indian, and being painted and dressed in Indian fashion, and speaking the Indian tongue perfectly, could not be known for a white man.

The Oneida deputation were received with great civility by their Canadian friends, who, of course, thought it essential to hospitality to make their guests drunk, and, though the Oneidas had taken a serious resolve against the temptation of the fire-water, they all yielded to its fascination, and were soon too far gone for diplomacy. The Canadian Indians used every endeavor to change the faith

All that was asked of any of the Indians in the beginning was neutrality, and this course was advocated by two or three of their great chiefs, Red Jacket, the great orator, among others. But the influence of the Johnsons and of Brant was too strong. Schuyler had demanded the surrender from Johnson of all arms, ammunition and warlike stores, and enforced his demand by the argument of a force of three thousand men, including the militia of the country, who, standing in great terror of the Johnsons, turned out with readiness. Sir John surrendered his arms and gave his parole of honor not to act against the American cause.

Schuyler, however, had no sooner withdrawn, than the baronet broke his parole, and his adherents began to be as bold as ever in molesting those who sided with the colonies. Congress directed Schuyler to make Johnson a prisoner, and in May, Colonel Dayton was

of the Oneidas to the colonies, but drunk though they were, they manfully adhered to their friends.

At night, Mr. Dean was invited to share the mat with the Canadian chief, in his wigwam, and when they were alone, the Canadian used every argument he could think of to induce the supposed Oneida leader to bring over his people to King George.

"All the trouble with the Oneidas," said the Canadian chief, "is the fault of that Jimmy Dean. If I had that white man, I would take care that he should never stand in King George's way again;" and then, sitting on the mat, the chief drew out his knife and tomahawk, and proceeded dramatically to illustrate the way in which Jimmy Dean was to be treated when caught. Mr. Dean, it may be supposed, found the lecture too interesting to be quite comfortable. He knew that his friends were all either drinking or drunk in various wigwams, and any of them might betray him at any moment. However, none of them did, and Mr. Dean returned to his Oneida home in safety.

sent to Johnstown for that purpose. Sir John, however, had his timely warning.

He placed his most valuable effects in an iron chest, which he buried in his garden, and then collecting a number of his Scottish tenants and other Tories, he fled through the woods. After a toilsome march of nineteen days, they arrived at Montreal.*

Sir John immediately received the commission of a colonel in the British service. He raised two battalions of loyalists, afterwards known as the Johnson Greens, and was one of the most implacable enemies of the American cause.†

Washington was on the alert to provide against the danger of Indian invasion. He wrote to General Schuyler to send Colonel Dayton to take post at old

* Sir John entrusted a negro, whom he owned, with the burial of the iron chest. When Johnson Hall was sold, Colonel Volkert Veeder bought the slave. The faithful fellow, though much pressed and closely watched, never told where the treasure was hidden. Sir John, in the year 1780, revisited the hall, recovered his slave, and, by his aid, found the treasure undiminished. Whether he rewarded the loyal negro, I have not been able to learn.

† Lady Johnson was conveyed to Albany. She was treated with all courtesy and kindness, but was for some time detained as a sort of hostage for her husband. At the sale of Johnson Hall, Mr. John Gaylor, afterward Lieutenant-Governor of New York, bought the family Bible for four guineas. Seeing that it contained the family record, he politely wrote to Sir John, offering to restore it. A messenger was sent for the book, who told Mr. Gaylor that he had come for Sir John's Bible, and that these were the four guineas which it cost. The man was asked whether Sir John had sent any message, and what it was. "Pay the money and take the book," was the reply.

Fort Stanwix (a name afterward foolishly changed to *Rome*), and requested him to hold a conference with the Six Nations.

"We expect a bloody summer," he wrote to his brother Augustine, "and I regret to say we are not, in men or arms, prepared for it. However, it is to be hoped that, if our cause is just, as I most religiously believe, the same Providence which has in many cases appeared for us, will still go on to afford its aid."

Washington not only believed in God, but he believed that God was with him. "The Lord is on my side; I will not fear what man may do unto me," was his motto.

A very important point was now to secure the Hudson—the grand means of communication between the northern and southern armies, and with the interior of New York. Various forts were built and repaired, for the purpose of commanding the river. The principal ones were Fort Montgomery, just north of the Dunderberg and opposite to Anthony's Nose; Fort Constitution, about six miles up the river, near West Point; Fort Independence, or, as it was afterwards called, Fort Lee, which defended King's Bridge, and Fort Washington. Everything was put in the best order possible, as it was known that the British would use every effort to get possession of New York.

At this juncture a great alarm was raised. There was, it was said, a conspiracy between the Tories on Long Island and those in the city; they were to take up arms, and co-operate with the British troops as soon as the fleet should arrive. The wildest reports

flew over the country. Some of the Tories were to destroy King's Bridge to prevent the retreat of the Americans; the guns were to be spiked, the magazines were to be blown up, all the generals were to be murdered, Washington was to be given up to the British, or killed as soon as taken.

That there was a conspiracy there is little doubt, and its chief supporters seem to have been among the liquor-sellers, several of whom were named as having been active in corruption and treachery.

A committee from the New York Congress went vigorously to work to investigate the matter, under their chairman, John Jay. The plot was, as might have been expected, traced up to Governor Tryon, who, from his position on the ships, acted through agents on the shore. The principal in the city was David Matthews, the Mayor. He was accused of having spent money in corrupting the soldiers, enlisting men and purchasing arms. The committee authorized and ordered Washington to arrest Matthews. His house was at Flat Creek, not far from Greene's encampment. Washington sent the order to arrest Matthews to Greene, by whom it was promptly executed. No papers, however, were found in Matthews' house, though careful search was made.

There were several other arrests, and among them some of Washington's own body-guard.

The Tories were greatly alarmed, and many of those on Long Island ran away and hid themselves in the woods and marshes. Washington ordered that those arrested who were of the army should be tried by

court-martial and the others turned over to the civil power.

It appeared before the committee that Governor Tryon had offered five guineas and a large bounty in land to every man who would enter the king's service. The men thus enlisted were to join the king's troops when they came.

Much of the evidence given was of a very doubtful kind. Washington did not think that the conspirators had arranged any regular plan, and was in hopes that "the matter, by a timely discovery, would be suppressed." Matthews admitted that he had known of the efforts to corrupt Washington's guard, though he declared that he had disapproved of them. He had also paid money to another of the accused, Gilbert Forbes, a gunsmith, for guns made and to be made. He had done this at the request of Governor Tryon, and, as he said, with great reluctance. He had warned Forbes that if discovered he would be hanged.

The mayor and several others were detained in prison for trial.

Thomas Hickey, a soldier of Washington's guard, was tried before a court-martial. He was an Irishman, a deserter from the British army. The court found him guilty of mutiny, sedition and traitorous correspondence with the enemy, and he was sentenced to death.

Washington approved the sentence, and it was carried into effect in the most solemn and impressive manner. He was executed in a field near Bowery lane in the presence of twenty thousand people, includ-

ing all the soldiers off duty. Washington, in his orderly book, expresses his hope that the fate of Hickey would be a warning to all "to avoid the crime for which he suffered."

Hardly had this alarm subsided, when it was followed by another far more serious. On the 29th of June the lookout on Staten Island announced that not less than forty sail were in sight. These were the ships which had gone from Boston to Halifax, together with six transports filled with Highlanders.

They made no attempt to ascend the Hudson, as expected, but came to anchor off Staten Island, where they landed their men and pitched their tents all over the hills. Later arrivals swelled the number of the fleet to one hundred and thirty men-of-war and transports. While the hostile fleet was day by day increasing, and more and more tents were pitched on Staten Island, it was discovered that the ramifications of the Tory plot had extended up the Hudson, and though nothing came of it, the whole region was thrown into a state of great anxiety and agitation. On the *Greyhound* came General Howe, Washington's old adversary at Boston. He immediately had a conference with Governor Tryon, and seems to have expected a general rising of the Tories, which party he seems to have thought comprised almost all the people of the province of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. He was disappointed in his hopes, however. The Tories were nowhere in the majority, and such was the character of by far the greater part that they were better at plots than at fighting.

Those in and about New York knew that Washington had hanged Thomas Hickey, and possibly they thought that he might find time to hang several more of them before he was driven away, in which case the arrival of General Howe would be of no particular advantage to them.

Washington was anxious and full of care. He saw the full gravity of the situation, and seems from the first to have had some doubt of being able to hold New York, but not the less on that account did he take every precaution and strain every nerve to be ready to meet the enemy. In his general order, dated July 2d, he says:

"The fate of unborn millions will now depend, under God, upon the courage and conduct of this army. Our cruel and unrelenting enemy leaves us no choice but a brave resistance or the most abject submission. This is all we have to expect. We have therefore to resolve to conquer or die. . . . Let us rely upon the goodness of the cause, and the aid of the Supreme Being, in whose hands victory is, to animate and encourage us to great and noble actions."

CHAPTER IX.

THE DECLARATION.

IN the midst of this trouble and care, Washington received stirring news from Philadelphia.

Congress had at last resolved to take a step which, to an indifferent spectator, or to one who believed that Providence was always on the side of the strongest battalions, must have seemed absolute madness. At first neither the colonies nor their representatives had thought a separation from the mother country possible or desirable. Even so late as October, 1774, Washington himself, writing to his early friend, Captain M'Kenzie, had said: "Give me leave to add, and I think I can announce it as a fact, that it is not the wish or interest of that government (Massachusetts), or any other on this continent, separately or collectively, to set up for independence." But it soon became clear that no middle course was open to the colonies; they must either be an independent nation or submit to be treated not only as children, but as slaves.

It was in no sudden gust of passion that the Declaration of Independence was made, nor was it dictated by unpractical dreamers, hoping to bring about by some machinery of human device an impossible Utopia.

To the last possible hour Congress hesitated to

break the only link which bound them to England. North Carolina was the first to take the decisive step. So early as May, 1775, the Provincial Congress, assembling at Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, in spite of their Governor's prohibition, in effect declared themselves the representatives of a free state, and on the 22d of April, 1776, the convention of North Carolina instructed her delegates in Congress "to concur with those of the other colonies in declaring independence."

The people of Boston ordered their members to inform Congress that in case the declaration was made, "the inhabitants of that colony (Massachusetts), with their lives and the *remnant* of their fortunes, would most cheerfully support them in that measure."

Virginia, on the 17th of May, bade her delegates propose a declaration of independence. Rhode Island speedily followed the example. The New York Legislature would give no instruction without the express sanction of the people, and called on them to signify their sentiments at the next election. The assembly of Connecticut, June 14th, issued instructions to its members to vote for independence, and, on the 15th, New Hampshire passed similar resolutions. New Jersey left her representatives to their own judgment. Pennsylvania at first forbade her members to concur. In June, these restrictions were removed; but the Pennsylvanians were not instructed nor officially allowed to sanction the declaration. Maryland positively forbade the act, and Delaware, South Carolina and Georgia took no action, and left their members to vote as they pleased.

There was, as well there might be, doubt and dread. Every man who should publicly advocate the measure or put his hand to the deed knew that he ran the risk not only of political and financial ruin, but of a cruel and shameful death. Treason was still punished in England by hanging, drawing and quartering, and it was but little more than thirty years since the bloody executions after the Stuart rebellion had shown the world how little mercy was to be expected for those who took up arms against the crown.

The colonies were surrounded on all sides by savages, whom England was both able and willing to let loose upon the settlements. England had a powerful army and navy, under able and experienced commanders; she had ample stores; she had a host of mercenaries, trained to make war in a fashion hardly less pitiless than that of the Iroquois; and last, and worst, in every town and village, and on every frontier, she had those who sympathized with her cause and were ready to betray their own countrymen, some for love of King George, but more for King George's pay and plunder.

To resist a foe thus armed and equipped, Congress had a fast-lessening treasury, an army small and constantly fluctuating in numbers, ill paid, ill equipped and undisciplined, and, with all its patriotism, already greatly hampered by sectional differences and jealousy. Their resources were few; their difficulties were great; the danger of utter ruin was near and threatening, for every day Howe's fleet and army were drawing closer and closer to New York, and to the worn and harassed forces of Washington.

Yet the public conviction that the declaration must come grew stronger every day. On the 31st of January, Washington wrote to Reed:

"A few more such flaming arguments as were exhibited at Falmouth and Norfolk (two towns burned by the British), added to the unanswerable reasoning contained in the pamphlet "Common Sense," will not leave members at a loss to decide upon the propriety of separation.*

The event proved that Washington was in the right.

After twenty days of doubt and sorrowful hesitation, Richard Henry Lee, of Virginia, at last rose in his place, and in a voice steady, clear, and distinctly audible, read this resolution: "These United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States, and all political connection between us and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved."

Instantly John Adams seconded the resolution, and the deed was recorded in the journal, the name of the proposer and seconder being omitted, in order that the heavy responsibility might fall on all alike.

Three days afterward, a committee was appointed to prepare a declaration "in case Congress agree

* Several pamphlets under this title were written by Thomas Paine, and had great influence. The first number, published in December, 1776, was read to every corporal's guard. From this is the following extract:

"My secret opinion has ever been, and still is, that God Almighty will not give up a people to military destruction, or leave them unsupportedly to perish, who have so earnestly and repeatedly sought to avoid the calamities of war by every decent method which wisdom could invent."

thereto," the further consideration of the measure being postponed till the 1st of July. The committee consisted of Thomas Jefferson, of Virginia; John Adams, of Massachusetts; Benjamin Franklin, of Pennsylvania; Roger Sherman, of Connecticut; and Robert R. Livingston, of New York.

The original draft of the Declaration was written by Jefferson. Congress made some amendments and omitted certain phrases which were thought too violent. A resolution charging the king with forcing the slave trade upon the colonies was stricken out, as not in accordance with facts, so carefully did Congress guard against unjust accusation. Their cause was strong enough and their grievances needed no exaggeration.

On the 2d of July, Lee's first resolution was adopted. Maryland recalled her negative, and ordered her delegates to agree.

On the 4th of July, Congress, by a unanimous vote, accepted the Declaration of Independence, and were thenceforth the United States.

It was two o'clock in the afternoon when the final vote was announced. All through the debate the old bellman had waited in the steeple of Independence Hall. He had placed a little boy at the door below to give him notice if the vote should be in the affirmative. The time went on, an anxious crowd gathered in the street, and still the bell was silent.

At last the vote was announced. The boy waiting below shouted, "Ring, ring," and the next instant the bell, known ever since as the "Liberty Bell," told that a nation was born.

Around that bell may still be read its old motto, "Proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof."

Everywhere the Declaration was received with enthusiasm, but it was nowhere more gladly welcomed than in Washington's camp. It was not till the 9th of July that it reached the Commander-in-chief, and at six o'clock that evening it was read at the head of every brigade. The troops encamped on the common where the City Hall now stands were formed into a hollow square, within which Washington sat on horseback, while the Declaration was read aloud by one of his aids. When it was concluded, three hearty cheers were given.

In the centre of the Bowling Green stood an equestrian statue of George the Third, made of gilded lead. The night the Declaration was read, this statue was pulled down, broken in pieces, and sent to be run into bullets.* Some of the soldiers seem to have taken part in this proceeding, as Washington in his general order censures the deed as "riotous,' and indicating want of discipline, and the soldiers were forbidden to indulge in similar acts.†

On the same day, the general order announced that Congress had allowed a chaplain to each regiment, and

* Bullets were made of other materials as uncommon as royal statues. We know of one handsome old pewter service, a much prized and greatly bescoured heir loom, which was run into balls. These pewter bullets were not uncommon among the New England troops, and were said to be more dangerous than lead.

† Glover's well-known sailor soldiers were active in the destruction of the statue.

soldiers and officers were ordered to pay them proper respect."

"The blessing and protection of Heaven," says the General, "are at all times necessary, but especially so in times of public distress and danger." The General "hopes and trusts that every officer and man will endeavor so to live and act as becomes a Christian soldier, defending the dearest rights and liberties of his country."

CHAPTER X.

OPERATIONS IN CANADA—LEE'S VICTORIES IN THE SOUTH.

NEVER has this nation seen darker days than those immediately succeeding its birth. The expedition to Canada, from which so much had been expected, had resulted in the most disastrous manner, and disappointed the hopes which had been excited by Montgomery's capture of Fort Chamblee and Fort St. John, on the Sorel. Ethan Allen, who had been sent to recruit among the Canadians, had made an ill-judged attack upon Montreal. He was to have been reinforced by troops under Major Brown; but Brown failed to join forces, and at the end of an hour and three-quarters hard fighting, Allen was left with only twenty-eight men to oppose two hundred and forty, his Canadian allies having all deserted him. Allen and his men surrendered on the promise of honorable terms.

General Prescott, however, learning that Allen was the man who had taken Ticonderoga, was mean enough to treat him and his men with great cruelty, by way of revenge for the loss of the fort.

On the 19th of November, Montgomery appeared before Montreal.

General Carleton, knowing that his small force could not defend the town against the Americans, embarked his men and the more important stores on board ten eleven small vessels, and sailed away in the night.

The next day, Montgomery entered the town and took quiet possession. He gained the good will of the inhabitants, treating them with kindness and courtesy and protecting them in their rights.

He met with an additional success in the capture of Carleton's flotilla, with the officers' stores and General Prescott on board. Carleton, however, had escaped to Quebec.

Notwithstanding his success, Montgomery wrote to Congress that "till Quebec was taken, Canada was not conquered." He learned by intercepted letters that Arnold, so long and anxiously expected, had arrived in the neighborhood of Quebec.

Montgomery now prepared to join Arnold, but he found himself hindered not only by the severity of the weather, but by discontent among his troops.

The system of short enlistments, against which Washington so often protested, brought forth the same fruits in Canada as on this side the border. Many of the men went home, and others refused to accompany their General to Quebec.

Montgomery, gallant soldier as he was, was not altogether a popular commander. He had learned his profession as an officer in the British army, and, to judge from his letters, did not understand or sympathize with the feelings of men who were citizens as well as soldiers. He confesses, in a letter to Schuyler,

that he had not "the patience and temper requisite for such a command."

Schuyler had his own share of vexations and annoyances, and at one time both he and Montgomery were on the point of resigning their commissions. Congress, however, protested against Schuyler's retirement, and Washington added his remonstrances.

"I am sorry," he said, "that you and General Montgomery incline to quit the service. Let me ask you, sir, when is the time for brave men to exert themselves in the cause of liberty and their country, if this is not? Should any difficulties that they may have to encounter at this important crisis deter them? God knows that there is not a difficulty that you both very justly complain of that I have not in an eminent degree experienced—that I am not every day experiencing; but we must bear up against them, and *make the best of mankind as they are, since we cannot have them as we wish.* Let me, therefore, conjure you and Mr. Montgomery to lay aside such thoughts, as thoughts injurious to yourselves and extremely so for your country, which calls aloud for gentlemen of your ability."

This letter prevailed, and Schuyler, happily for the country, remained at his post, as did also Montgomery.

With the few men who were left to him, Montgomery pushed on to join Arnold, who, after a wearisome march of thirty-two days through a wilderness of woods and mountains, had arrived in the neighborhood of Quebec.

A junction with Montgomery was effected. The city was summoned to surrender, and the bearer of the

flag of truce, in defiance of the laws of war, was fired upon. Montgomery had expected the inhabitants to rise in his favor, but, though many of the principal persons in the town are said to have been favorers of the American cause, Carleton had the place and the people too thoroughly under control of the military to permit them to take any action.

Three weeks were consumed in futile operations before Quebec, and at last, on the 31st of December, an attempt was made to take the place by storm, which had very nearly succeeded, when Montgomery, who, with too reckless bravery, had led the assault, was killed by a cannon ball. The second officer in command was far in the rear, and the gentleman who was nearest to Montgomery in front, bewildered by the death of the General, ordered a retreat. Arnold, who had succeeded in entering the town in another quarter, was wounded, and the retreat of Montgomery's men left Carleton at leisure to turn all his forces against the other parties engaged in the attack.

The Americans were obliged to withdraw, leaving several of their men prisoners. To his honor, General Carleton treated these prisoners with great humanity, and Montgomery was honorably buried within the walls of the fort.*

* General Montgomery wore at the time of his death a watch which his widow was anxious to obtain. Arnold sent word to Carleton that any sum asked would be paid for it, but it was immediately sent to him by Carleton. In 1818, Montgomery's remains were removed from Quebec to St. Paul's Church, New York, where they rest under a monument erected by order of Congress. A day or two before he left home, he was walking in

Death of General Montgomery. p. 178.

Arnold, wounded and suffering as he was, took the command, and, with a force at one time not exceeding five thousand men, he maintained the blockade of the fortress.

"I am in the way of my duty," he wrote, "and I know no fear."

Well would it have been for Arnold had he fallen with Montgomery while in "the way of duty."

He maintained his blockade through the rigors of a Canadian winter, and on the first of April was joined by Wooster from Montreal. Arnold was on unfriendly terms with Wooster, and, suffering much with his wound, he obtained leave to go to Montreal.

Smallpox broke out, and raged terribly in the American camp. Thomas succeeded Wooster, but by that time the ice in the river was breaking up, and as soon as navigation was open, the British fleet would arrive. One more attempt was made to take the place by storm, but the plan failed, and preparations were made to retreat. Reinforcements for the enemy arrived before these preparations were complete, and the Americans, who could not muster three hundred men at any point, withdrew, leaving behind valuable stores and arms, and even their sick, whom Carleton treated with great kindness, placing them in the general hospitals, and afterward allowing them to return home.

Reinforcements for the English continuing to arrive,

the grounds of his brother-in-law, Mr. Livingston, at Rhinebeck. He stuck a willow twig into the ground, saying, "Peter, let that grow, to remember me by." The tree did grow, and is, I believe, still standing. For this anecdote, I am indebted to Mr. Lossing.

Thomas was forced to retreat to the mouth of the Sorel, and shortly after his arrival, was taken ill of the smallpox, and died on the 2d of June.

Sullivan succeeded him, and at first had sanguine expectations of defending the mouth of the Sorel. General Thompson, however, who had been sent on an expedition to Three Rivers, was betrayed by treacherous guides, and after great loss succeeded in rejoining Sullivan only with the greatest difficulty.

The English numbered thirteen thousand, while Sullivan, with the smallpox raging in his camp, had but little over two thousand five hundred men. It being the unanimous opinion of his officers that the post should be abandoned, Sullivan retreated with his artillery and stores, pursued along the Sorel by Burgoyne. On the 18th he was joined by Arnold with three hundred men, who had remained at Montreal till the last possible moment.

The Americans reached St. John's with the enemy in close pursuit. The commander wished to defend the fort, but the time of most of the militia had expired, an overwhelming force was close at hand, and the prospect of being shut up in the fort, to face at once the British without and the smallpox within, was no encouragement to re-enlist. Sullivan destroyed everything that he could at St. John's and Chamblee, broke down the bridges, and continued his retreat to Isle Aux Noix, where he halted to hear from Washington or Schuyler.

Arnold, and Wilkinson, his aid, lingered behind till the enemy were within two miles, when they set fire to

the forts with their own hands, shot their horses, and in a boat hastened to overtake the flotilla.

Sullivan wrote from Isle Aux Noix to Washington: "Whether we shall have well men enough to carry them (the sick) on, I much doubt, if we don't remove quickly, unless Heaven is pleased to restore health to this wretched army, now perhaps the most pitiful one that ever was formed."

Sullivan, shortly after receiving orders from Schuyler, embarked his forces for Crown Point, and the campaign in Canada, which had cost so much in blood and treasure, was over.

When we remember that Congress had received the news of the disastrous issue of this campaign just before the adoption of the Declaration, we can only wonder at their steady courage. The outlook was dark; it was to human eyes almost hopeless, and yet as I write this sentence the midnight bells and cannon and the voice of a multitude sound the entrance of the great Republic into its hundredth year.

"Canada would certainly have been an important acquisition," writes Washington to Congress on the 30th of June, 1776, "and well worth the expenses incurred in the pursuit of it. But as we could not reduce it to our possession, the retreat of our army with so little loss, under such a variety of distresses, must be esteemed a most fortunate exit."

The exit of the Canadian campaign, however, was esteemed anything but fortunate by the people on the Canadian frontier, who had looked to the army of the North as their defence against the Indians. New

Hampshire, the New Hampshire Grants, Berkshire county, and even the tracts along the Connecticut, were exposed to invasion by the withdrawal of the troops under Schuyler's orders.

They were greatly and justly alarmed, and according to a principle existing in human nature, they looked for some one individual upon whom to throw the blame of their distress.

Most unjustly they pitched upon General Schuyler. Sir John Johnson, as we have seen, had broken the parole he had given to Schuyler, and was doing his best to raise the Six Nations and the Tories to fall upon the settlements. Brant, who was to prove the cause of ruin to his people, was closely united with him and it was reported that they were marching down the Mohawk ready to murder and burn in all directions, and the terror of the Indians haunted every lonely farm-house and every village through New York and New England.*

It was thought that Schuyler had shown too much favor to the Johnsons and to the British prisoners

* To "have an interest in Johnstown" was equivalent to being under the protection of Sir John and his allies, and in this part of the country it is still a proverbial saying: "I would not do so and so for an interest in Johnstown." The writer's father was closely connected with the Indians who remained in Western New York after the Revolution. The elder warriors laid the blame of their ruin on Brant and Johnson. One old squaw thus advised her son, a Seneca chief: "'Spose Yankee beat; 'spose Red Coat beat? Red Coat go away, Yankee stay here. Yankee live next, you Indian. Yankee pay *you* for fight *him*." The poor old lady, however, was as vainly wise as Cassandra.

C. F. G.

who had fallen into his hands. The Tories did all they could to encourage the discontent, and before long, meetings were held in towns and districts, and resolves were passed, expressing distrust of Schuyler, and insinuating that he was a traitor to the cause. Some of these resolves were sent to the New York Provincial Congress and to Washington. All who knew Schuyler knew that the charges were groundless, but it was deemed best to forward them to the accused patriot.

On the 21st of May, Washington wrote to Schuyler as follows:

"I enclose for your perusal, copies of two informations. From these you will readily discover the diabolical arts and schemes being carried on by the Tories and friends of Government to raise distrust, dissensions and divisions among us."

From the unusual force of the words used by Washington, it is evident that he was much moved. He says that he looks upon the charges not only "with an eye of disbelief, but with sentiments of detestation and abhorrence," and assures General Schuyler of his highest esteem and confidence.

Schuyler, in his letter to the Provincial Congress, expresses himself with a moderation remarkable under the circumstances, and lays the charges made against him not only to the Tories, but to certain men who had been disappointed in obtaining office.

"It is something singular," he says, "that at the very time I was sending troops to apprehend Tories, to whom I am so obnoxious, they would not hesitate

to assassinate me—the country below should be arming against me as a Tory."

To Washington, however, he writes with more energy, and complains that "at the very time assassins and incendiaries are employed to take away my life and destroy my property, a set of pretended Whigs—for such they are that have propagated these diabolical tales—should proclaim him through all America as a traitor to his country." "There never was a man," says the provoked patriot, "so infamously scandalized and ill-treated as I am."

I have told this story of General Schuyler at some length, as it is but one specimen of the numerous troubles which at that time beset Washington and his generals.

Those who figure to themselves the career of a hero, are apt to picture a man constantly doing grand and dignified deeds, in a grand and dignified fashion, in an atmosphere far above the petty vexations and troubles that wear out the patience of common humanity; but no conception can be more false. The heroic life is made up, like other lives, of details, and "he that endures overcomes."

Lee, who had at first been destined for Canada, had been appointed to the Southern Department, much to his disappointment, which he was not slow to express. Washington, in a letter to his brother Augustine, thus sketches Lee's character:

"He is the first in military knowledge and experience that we have in the whole army. He is zealously attached to the cause, honest and well-meaning, but

rather fickle and violent, I fear, in his temper. However, as he possesses an uncommon share of good sense and spirit, I congratulate my countrymen on his appointment to that department."

Nothing can form a greater contrast to the restrained, calm style of Washington than the letters of Lee, who, while discharging with great ability the duties of his southern command, nevertheless scolded, fretted and complained, with what Irving calls "whimsical and splenetic humor."

He had quarrelled with the Committee of Safety in New York, and he was equally out of humor with the provincial authorities in Virginia. "My situation," he writes, "is just as I expected. I am afraid I shall make a shabby figure, without any real demerits of my own. I am like a dog in a dancing-school. I can only act from surmise, and I have a very good chance of surmising wrong. I am sorry to grate your ears with a truth, but must, at all events, assure you that the Provincial Congress of New York are angels of decision when compared with your countrymen, the Committee of Safety, assembled at Williamsburg. From Pendleton Bland, the treasurer, and company—'*Libera nos Domine.*'"

A letter written a little later is as full of praise as the one just quoted is of condemnation.

"A noble spirit," he tells Washington, "pervades all orders of men." He is "on the best terms with the Senatorial part, as well as with the people at large, and will endeavor to preserve their confidence and good opinion." He had formed two companies of grenadiers

to each regiment, with spears thirteen feet long. "Their rifles," he writes—"for they are all riflemen—they sling over their shoulders, and their appearance is formidable." He likewise furnished his troops with four ounce rifle amusettes, which weapon, he avers with emphasis, "will carry an infernal distance," and boasts that the two ounce rifles will hit a sheet of paper at five hundred yards.

Lee's confidence in that American weapon, the rifle, was not misplaced. In October, 1775, the British had made an attempt to land and burn Hampton, but they were repulsed by Colonel Woodford, with only one hundred men. So deadly was the rifle fire that the boats were compelled to retreat.

The next day the whole fleet made an attack, but so sure was the aim of the riflemen, that the ships could hardly be managed, as the men on duty were picked off one after the other. Two of the sloops drifted ashore, and before the fleet could escape, the people of the town and Woodford's corps had destroyed five vessels, to the consternation of the British, who, until a very late period, had no idea of the use of sharpshooters.

On the 9th of December, an encounter of the two forces, near Great Bridge, not far from Norfolk, resulted in a victory for the Americans. Lord Dunmore was driven out, and the Tories and their families, whom he had invited to join him, took refuge with him on board the fleet, while the unhappy negroes, whom he had allured to his standard from all sides, were left to starve, or to the mercies of their masters. The fleet

was much harassed by the fire from the town, and word was sent that if the Americans did not cease their attacks, and supply the fleet with provisions, the town would be bombarded. A flat refusal was given; the threat was executed, and the town destroyed. Lord Dunmore, while the conflagration was in progress, added to the horror by a cannonade from the ships. Strange to say, however, not one of the troops was killed, and but seven persons were wounded.

The attacking parties who attempted to land were driven off. Little of the town was left, and that little was destroyed by the consent of the inhabitants, that it might not at some future day fall into the hands of the English.

Lord Dunmore continued to destroy houses and plantations along the coast, having as little regard to friends as to foes, and converting, by his folly and cruelty, many loyalists to the American cause. It is said that he intended to destroy Mount Vernon and take Mrs. Washington prisoner, but the design failed.

In the beginning of June, the British fleet, under Sir Henry Clinton, appeared off Charleston.

Hardly, however, did the ships come in sight, than Lee was marching his troops into the city. The people received him with great joy, as they had formed a high idea of his military genius.

Though James' Island and Sullivan's Island, which were the keys of the harbor, were fortified, Lee wrote to Washington that he found the town utterly defenceless. Great, therefore, was his relief when he saw that Sir Henry Clinton, instead of running past the t[illegible]

little forts, and sailing directly into the harbor, was preparing to attack Sullivan's Island.

"He has lost an opportunity, such as, I hope, will never occur again," said Lee, "of taking the town."

From the 1st to the 28th of June, Sir Henry Clinton kept his men at work on what was then known as Long Island, to oppose Colonel Thompson, on Sullivan's Island.

The heat on the burning sand was intense, the water was bad, and provisions were scanty and inferior. The health of the British troops suffered, and their spirits declined.

On the 28th of June, the attack was begun by Sir Peter Parker, who, from the thunder bomb, threw shells at the fort. The contest continued for twelve hours, and Lee speaks in the highest terms of the courage of his men.

He passed over to the fort in a small boat, to animate his troops, but says he found they had no occasion for such encouragement. His letter to Washington is as follows:

"The cool courage they displayed astonished and enraptured me, for I do assure you, my dear General, I never experienced a better fire. The noble fellows who were mortally wounded conjured their brethren never to abandon the standard of liberty. Those who lost their limbs deserted not their posts. Upon the whole, they behaved like Romans of the third century."

The coolness of the American troops is mentioned with admiration by a British historian.

"While the continued fire of our ships," he says,

"seemed sufficient to shake the firmness of the bravest enemy and daunt the courage of the most veteran soldier, the return made by the fort could not fail of calling for the respect as well as of highly incommoding the brave seamen of Britain. They stuck to their guns with the greatest constancy and firmness, fired deliberately and slowly, and took a cool and effective aim. Never did our marines, in an engagement of the same nature with any foreign enemy, experience so rude an encounter."

The fire from the ships did not produce the expected effect. Several of the ships ran aground, while one, a frigate bearing the ill-omened name of Actæon, remained. She was set on fire and abandoned, her guns being left loaded. The Americans, however, boarded her, secured her colors, and the ship's bell, carried off three boat loads of stores, and fired her guns at the Bristol before she blew up.

The battle continued till near ten o'clock P. M., with great loss to the British. Among the number killed, was Lord Campbell, late Governor of the Province, who served as a volunteer on board the fleet. The ships were torn almost to pieces, and at last Sir Peter Parker withdrew his shattered vessels to Five Fathom Hole. On the 31st of June, General Clinton, with Cornwallis and the troops, escorted by Sir Peter Parker, sailed for New York.

It was a most important victory, for it occurred at a time when the British were desirous of making a great impression, both in the New World and in the Old.

In the first encounter between the Americans and a

regular British fleet, the despised "Provincials" had put to rout an experienced admiral and general, and severely injured the naval force hitherto considered almost invincible.

Lord Howe was then on his way to act "as commissioner to settle all difficulties, or as commander to prosecute the war." In whatever capacity circumstances might decide his lordship to act, the result of the Charleston battle was not encouraging.

The whole loss of the Americans was but thirty-five men. The name of Fort Sullivan was changed to Fort Moultrie, a well-merited honor to its defender. Lee, in his report to Washington, speaks with mingled thankfulness and contempt of "the dilatoriness and stupidity of the enemy."

Most welcome were the tidings of this victory to Washington, who was daily dreading an attack on New York. With unusual familiarity he writes to Schuyler: "Sir Peter Parker and his fleet got a severe drubbing."

On the 21st of July, a general order announced the victory to the army, as follows:

"The General has great pleasure in communicating to the officers and soldiers of the army the signal success of the American arms under General Lee. With such a bright example before us, of what can be done by brave and spirited men, fighting in defence of their country, we shall be loaded with a double share of infamy if we do not acquit ourselves with courage, or a determined resolve to conquer or die."

The order further exhorts every officer and soldier to

pay the greatest attention to his arms and health—to have the former in the best condition for action, and, by cleanliness and care to preserve the latter; to be exact in discipline, obedient to superiors, and vigilant on duty. "With such preparation, and a suitable spirit, there can be no doubt that, by the blessing of Heaven, we shall repel our cruel invaders, preserve our country, and gain the greatest honor."

CHAPTER XI.

WASHINGTON IN NEW YORK.

WASHINGTON and his men had need of all the encouragement they could derive from Lee's victories at the South. Ever since the 29th of June, General Howe, with a fleet and transports containing his army, had been lying at Sandy Hook.

On the 6th of July he landed nine thousand men on Staten Island, and waited for the arrival of his brother, Admiral Howe, with the English regulars and the redoubtable Hessians. On the 11th, arrived Sir Peter Parker and Sir Henry Clinton, from Charleston. The 12th of July was a day of great and painful excitement for New York. On that day two ships of war were seen to separate from the fleet and to stand in toward the city. One was the *Phœnix*, of forty guns; the other the *Rose*, of twenty. Their commander was Captain Wallace, whose marauding expeditions along the New England coast and tyrannical conduct in Rhode Island had made his name detested by the Americans. The troops were immediately at their alarm posts, but the ships, with favoring wind and tide, swept up the bay toward the Hudson. The city batteries and those from Paulus Hook, on the Jersey shore, opened fire, and the ships returned the fire with

broadsides. The citizens, placed in a position where they could neither fight nor flee, were thrown into a panic. Women and children did their best or their worst to increase the confusion, and their screams and cries, as they ran hither and thither lamenting their supposed approaching destruction, were anything but encouraging or animating to the soldiers.

Washington was at that moment writing to Congress on matters of grave importance. He urged that body to take into consideration the great danger of the Northern settlements, owing not only to the retreat of the Northern army, but to the fact that the smallpox continuing to rage among the troops returned from Canada, prevented others from enlisting. He also begged that Congress would appoint an office for auditing accounts—a request he had made before.

"Two motives," he says, "induce me to urge the matter: First, a conviction of its utility; secondly, that I may stand exculpated if hereafter it should appear that money has been improperly expended and necessaries for the army obtained upon unreasonable terms.

"For me, whose time is employed from the hour of my rising till I retire to bed again, to go into personal examination of the accounts of such an army as this, with any degree of precision and exactness, without neglecting other matters of equal importance, is utterly impracticable."

He goes on to urge the necessity of the proposed reform, but the letter, which is dated on the 11th of July, breaks off in the midst and was finished on the 12th.

The concluding paragraph not only gives the alarming news that the two vessels of war had passed the batteries uninjured into the Hudson, but that the British fleet were saluting a line-of-battle ship which had just come in, and which, by the St. George's flag at her foretop mast, was known to be the ship of Admiral Howe.

On that same day another disembarkation took place on Staten Island, and there and on board the English transports an army of nearly thirty thousand men was arrayed against the new Republic.

With the enemy so near, and so greatly outnumbering the American army, great vigilance was necessary to guard against the foes within. In consequence of the recent plot of Governor Tryon and his friends, a secret committee had been organized. The Provincial Convention had removed to White Plains but this committee had its sittings in New York.

To this body Washington, on the 13th, addressed a letter suggesting that all persons of known disaffection and enmity to the cause of America be removed from the city and its environs. With his usual good sense he observes, "that justice to the inferior agents while the others pass unnoticed only excites compassion and censure." "A suspicion that there are many ministerial agents among us would justly alarm soldiers of more experience and discipline than ours, and I foresee very dangerous consequences if a remedy for this evil is not soon and efficaciously applied."

He suggests that the Tory prisoners confined in the city jail should be removed, declares that it is with extreme reluctance that he interferes to advise the

civil authority, and he also says that the officers of the army, from their want of knowledge of the inhabitants as well as for other reasons, are quite incompetent to superintend the removal of the suspected and accused, and that the matter could not be placed in military hands without "great inconvenience to the citizens."

Extreme as was the emergency, pressing as was the danger, he would not step over what he conceived the exact line of his duty. His letter had its effect, as we learn from the journal of the New York Convention that thirteen Tory prisoners were removed to the jail at Litchfield, in Connecticut. The mayor of the city was one of the number, but as he was not supposed to be as guilty as the other conspirators, he was treated with as much indulgence as was consistent with his safe keeping.

Lord Howe and his brother had been appointed as Commissioners to treat with the Americans, and their proceedings soon showed how necessary had been the precautions taken in regard to the Tories. The powers of the two brothers were great. They were authorized to offer a free pardon to all who would return to their allegiance to the crown. Towns and colonies professing themselves penitent were to be excepted from the non-intercourse penalty, and rewards were promised to those who should help to restore tranquillity.

Proclamations to this effect were sent on shore, addressed to the Colonial Governors, and meant to circulate among the people.

Congress, however, denounced the proclamation as "a scheme to amuse and disarm the people." Few of

the patriotic party had any belief in the fraternal and affectionate tone taken by the British Government, when they remembered the burning of Falmouth and Norfolk, Wallace's course in New England, Dunmore's ravages in Virginia, and the persistent attempts made to stir up the Indians.

On the 19th of July, an incident occurred which must in some measure have taught Lord Howe the temper of the commander to whom he was opposed.

About three o'clock in the afternoon, Washington was informed that a flag of truce from Lord Howe was coming up. Its bearer, Lieutenant Brown, sought a conference with the Commander-in-chief.

Washington, then in his headquarters at the Kennedy House, No. 1 Broadway, immediately called together a council of such general officers as were not on duty. All agreed that their Commander should receive no letter which should be directed to him merely as a private gentlemen. If such were not the case, however, the bearer of the flag of truce was to be received under a safe conduct.

Instructions were given to Colonel Reed, Washington's trusted friend, to go down and receive the officer, and manage the affair as the council had decided.

Colonel Reed, who was then acting as adjutant general, immediately took a boat, and met the flag of truce half-way between Staten Island and Governor's Island. The common civilities passed between the two gentlemen, and then Lieutenant Brown told Reed that he had a letter from Lord Howe to *Mr. Washington*, and showed the direction "To George Washington, Esq."

Colonel Reed replied that there was no such person in the army, and said that a letter for the General could not be received with such a direction. Lieutenant Brown appeared greatly concerned, and said that the letter was rather civil than military; that Lord Howe regretted he had not arrived sooner; Lord Howe had great powers.

There was evident anxiety to have the letter received, though the officer said he knew nothing of its contents. Colonel Reed's orders, however, were positive, and they parted, the letter undelivered. However, after the Lieutenant had gone some distance, his boat returned, and Reed waited to receive him.

"Under what title," he asked, "does General—that is, Mr. Washington, choose to be addressed?"

Reed replied that the station of the Commander was well known, and that, as this whole matter had been discussed the preceding summer, the Admiral could be at no loss how to address his letters.

Lieutenant Brown expressed his disappointment and regret, and the interview was ended.

"I would not," wrote Washington, in giving an account of this matter, "sacrifice essentials to punctilio, but in this instance, the opinion of others concurring with my own, I deem it a duty to my country and to my appointment to insist on that respect which, in any other than a public view, I would willingly have waived."

He added that he had no doubt that the British commander would fall upon some way to communicate his message.

Congress passed a resolution approving Washington's course in the matter, and ordering all officers to follow his example.

In the meantime, the two ships up the river were a subject of great alarm and anxiety. The Hudson was the highway to the interior of the country, and there was hardly any injury to the American cause which might not result if it fell into the enemy's hands. Were troops landed from the ships, they might take possession of the passes, cut off all intercourse between the Northern and Southern Army and intercept all supplies for the forces. Still worse, these two threatening ships might be loaded with arms, which, distributed to the Tories, might cause a general rising and kindle an internal war in every county and town, at a time when every man was needed for the defence of New York.

The two ships lay at anchor in Haverstraw Bay, safe from the artillery of that day, and their boats were daily sent out to take soundings.

Washington urged on the Provincial Congress the necessity of watching their dangerous invaders, and guarding the country along the Hudson and preventing their advance. He wrote to many leading gentlemen up the river, and recommended them to be vigilant both over the open foe on the ships and the traitors on land.

The war spirit along the Hudson, however, needed little encouragement. The militia were at once ordered out, and men armed with whatever came to hand were stationed near Tarrytown and along the shores of the

Tappan Sea. The militia also came down from Dutchess county and Cortlandt's Manor to guard the public stores at Peekskill and mount guard at the entrance of the Highlands.

Colonel Pierre Van Cortlandt, whose manorial home was at the mouth of the Croton, watched with his regiment along Haverstraw Bay and the Tappan Sea, and the western shore was guarded day and night with equal vigilance. Sentinels were posted on every rocky height to give the alarm should the enemy try to land.

Everywhere the men of the country who understood the use of the rifle formed into companies, chose their own officers, and stood ready to repel invasion at a moment's warning.

Infuriating, indeed, it must have been to the men thus assembled to watch the *Phœnix* and the *Rose* lying calmly in the July sunshine, their decks shaded with awnings and their boats rowing to and fro as they took soundings, in preparation, as it seemed, for farther advances into the heart of the State.

At night their barges rowed up and down the river, and, in spite of the watch maintained, boats would sometimes visit the ships from shore, carrying not only fresh provisions, but information gathered and retained by the royalists. The only exploit performed on shore by the crews of these ships was the plundering and burning of a solitary house at the foot of the Dunderberg, and on their way back to the ships the performers of this gallant action were severely injured by the American marksmen.

The near vicinity of these ships, however, caused

great uneasiness to Washington, especially because he feared that the Tories would furnish intelligence to their commanders. On the 19th of July, he again urged on the Committee of Safety the removal of the disaffected from the city, and rather sternly gave warning against "ill-timed lenity."

Great care and vigilance was used in taking up disaffected persons, and in spite of Washington's objections to the military authority being employed, it seems to have been used in some instances, as General Green gives a laughable account of an adventure of his own while engaged in examining certain men suspected of treachery. He calls them "a poor parcel of ignorant, cowardly fellows," and says they had only been persuaded "by their grandmothers and aunts" to run away to escape drafting. "They wept like children," he continues, "and appeared exceedingly sorrowful. They do not appear to be acquainted with one public matter. I beg your Excellency's direction how to dispose of them."

We are not informed what became of these unlucky individuals, but let us hope they were sent back in safety to their aunts and grandmothers.

On the 19th of July, Washington's prophecy that Howe would find means to send his message was verified by the arrival of an armed aid-de-camp with a flag of truce. This officer asked that Colonel Patterson, the British Adjutant-General, might have an interview with *General Washington.*

Reed, who met the envoy, gave his consent in Washington's name. The next day Colonel Patterson

arrived, was received by Reed and Webb and conducted to Washington's headquarters.

Washington was in full uniform, with his officers and guards about him, and received Howe's envoy with his usual stately courtesy.

Colonel Patterson addressed him as "Your Excellency," and endeavored to explain that in the former direction of his letter General Howe had only adopted a course usual among great personages, when there were doubts as to the rank of the parties addressed. This condescending attempt to instruct him in the etiquette of the great world was not likely to be received in very good part by a man of Washington's character. However, he made no reply, and the English officer produced a letter, directed to "George Washington, Esq., et cetera, et cetera," hoping that the "et cetera, which implied everything," would remove all difficulty.

Washington answered that if et ceteras implied everything, they also implied anything. A letter addressed to a person acting in a public capacity should have some inscription to mark the difference between it and a mere private letter, and he should entirely refuse to receive any letter directed to him as a private person when it referred to his public and official station. Colonel Patterson then tried to give the contents of the letter in conversation, and dwelt upon the favor and regard shown to America, the pleasure Lord Howe would feel in making peace, and the great powers entrusted to him for that purpose. Washington, referring to Lord Howe's circular, said the power of the commission seemed limited to granting pardons. Those

who had committed no crime needed no pardon, and such was the position of the Americans, who were only defending their indisputable rights.

Colonel Patterson justly remarked that a discussion of this matter would open a wide field, and the conference terminated, the English officer expressing himself obliged for the courtesy with which he had been treated.

The Republic was but fifteen days old, but, in the person of her Commander-in-chief, she had made herself respected.

Washington, and some of his generals, as "provincials," had been treated by the King's officers as an inferior caste, while engaged in the King's service, and it must have been no small satisfaction to them when they learned that Lord Howe had written home that he should think it best in future to give the American generals the titles due to their rank.

In the meantime matters were growing worse and worse with the northern army. Gates, who had been sent to succeed Thomas, had been obliged to retreat from Crown Point, after destroying the fortifications, and was now at Ticonderoga.

Every one was dismayed at this step. Washington, in a letter to Gates, written on this same 19th of July, expresses deep regret, and wishes that measures could yet be changed. Gates, in his reply, gives a terrible picture of the state of the army, still suffering from smallpox. "Everything," he says, "is infected with the pestilence—the clothes, the blankets, the air, the ground they tread upon." Three or four thousand

men were ill in the general hospital at Fort George, and the disease was increasing. Gates, in this letter, indulges in some rather bitter remarks upon the officers of Washington's council, who, as he thought, did not make allowance enough for the difficulties of his position, which were certainly great.

In addition to the other troubles besetting the northern army, were differences arising between the generals. Sullivan was so hurt that Gates should be sent to supersede him in the command, that he went to Philadelphia and offered his resignation, but was persuaded to remain in the service. Gates, who had been appointed to command the army while in Canada, thought that his commission entitled him to supersede Schuyler on this side of the frontier. Schuyler refused to give way, and was supported by the government, and Gates, though he professed himself satisfied, was vexed and mortified.

The sectional jealousies which were rife in Washington's army were also rife among the troops under Schuyler, and Washington wrote to him entreating him to put men and officers in mind of the duty of forbearance and harmony among those who were "mutually contending for all that freemen hold dear."

An affair, nearly concerning Connecticut, occurred at this time which tended still farther to embarrass Washington, and as it illustrates the state of matters at the period, we give the story as it is told by Irving.

Governor Trumbull, of Connecticut, had raised a troop of four or five hundred light horse, under the command of Colonel Thomas Seymour. Supposing,

from the suddenness with which they had been called out, that there was instant occasion for their services, they had hastened on in advance of the militia, and had left home in such haste, that many of them had not even provided themselves with a blanket or a change of clothes.

Such was the scarcity of forage, however, that their horses were obliged to be sent to pasture about the neighborhood of Kingsbridge, their owners paying half a dollar a week for them.

Washington thought that, under the circumstances, they would be of no use as horsemen, but was anxious that they should remain and do duty as infantry. At first the men agreed to this arrangement. Troopers in the army are exempt from certain duties that fall to infantry soldiers, and the light horse, on being required to serve like other troops, were discontented, and asked leave to go home.

Washington was vexed, and gave them their dismissal in a short note, and they left the camp mortified and troubled.

They were substantial farmers and property-owners, and at great sacrifice to themselves and their families they had left home at a moment's warning, quite unprepared for a campaign on foot; but there were other reasons to account for their discontent besides their reluctance to serve as infantry. Some of the city regiments and some from the South were well-armed and dressed in fine uniforms, and having had the advantage of a few months' drill, looked down upon the plain Connecticut men with their irregular equipments. The

"macaroni officers," as they were called, sneered at captains and lieutenants who were distinguished from their men only by a cockade, and were still more amused at the sight of a few old regimental coats of scarlet, trimmed with tarnished lace.

Some of these old regimentals, however, and their wearers, had witnessed the siege of Louisburg, and were by no means proper subjects of ridicule to untried soldiers, with the first gloss yet on their buff and scarlet.

It is evident from Colonel Seymour's letter to Governor Trumbull that he had been much vexed. "If the butterflies and coxcombs were away from the army," he says, "we should not be put to so much difficulty in obtaining men of common sense to engage in the service of their country." Well might John Adams say that it required "more serenity of temper, a deeper understanding and more courage than fell to the lot of Marlborough to ride this whirlwind and direct this storm."

In the meantime General Putnam had conceived the idea that the two ships lying in the Hudson might be stopped by obstructions sunk in the channel of the river, and he occupied himself busily with preparing a barricade of logs and sunken ships to intercept the *Phœnix* and the *Rose* on their passage down. There was also a plan to attack Lord Howe's fleet with fire-ships, while at the same time a descent was to be made upon the troops on Staten Island, by the soldiers from Mercer's flying camp and others. The latter plan, however, proved a failure. Anderson, the pro-

jector of the fire-ships, found it impossible to construct a sufficient number in time, and though Mercer and Major Knowlton made two attempts to invade Staten Island by night, both miscarried.

In a few days arrived a hundred sail, bearing reinforcements, among them a thousand Hessians.*

* King George was personally active in raising mercenary troops to coerce the rebellious Americans. He wrote a letter with his own hand to the States General of Holland soliciting them to sell their Scotch brigade for services against the Americans. The request was indignantly refused, and some very strong language was used in the Assembly about the King's proposition, declaring that the Americans were "a brave people, defending in a manly and religious manner those rights which as men they derived from God and not from the Legislature of Great Britain."

The Parliament of Ireland voted four thousand troops, and the King also entered into a treaty with the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, the Duke of Brunswick, the Prince of Hesse, and the Prince of Waldeck, for seventeen thousand men.

The friends of America in the House of Parliament contended against the measure in vain. It was passed by two hundred and forty-two to eighty-eight. The German Princes drove a very hard bargain. England, moreover, guaranteed their domains from attack. The unfortunate Germans were pressed into the service by the most tyrannical means. Men were taken from church while engaged in divine service, and hurried away without a farewell to their families. The King had been unwilling to give commissions to German officers to procure men, as he said it "would amount, in plain English, to making me a kidnapper, which I cannot think a very honorable occupation;" but the kidnapping took place, nevertheless. Frederick the Great, of Prussia, who was by no means scrupulous in the use of means, expressed great contempt for this "man traffic," and as they passed through his dominions he levied on them the toll for so many head of cattle.

These men were, for the most part, ignorant and brutal, and

These troops were disembarked and employed in fortifying the island, and the plan of an attack was given up.

On August 3d, Washington issued an order relieving the troops, except in case of necessity, from fatigue duty on Sunday, that they might attend divine service. He censures the increase of "the foolish and wicked practice of profane swearing." "We can have little hope of the blessing of Heaven on our arms if we insult it by our impiety and folly; added to this it is a vice so mean and so low, without any temptation,

those who had seen service had been trained in the most merciless school of war the age afforded.

They were first let loose on Long Island, and were objects of such hatred to the Americans that their name is still used among us as a term of reproach. Many of them, however, afterwards deserted, induced by a resolution of Congress offering them the rights of citizens and a bounty in land. This resolution was translated into German, and was circulated among them as occasion offered. Dr. Franklin caused these resolutions to be wrapped round papers of tobacco, which were allowed to fall as plunder into the hands of the mercenaries, and were widely circulated before the officers discovered the *ruse* of the philosopher.

After the departure of the British from New York, many American householders were surprised to find the dreaded mercenaries emerging from cellars, smoke-houses, and other places of concealment, asking for bread and for employment, conducting themselves with great humility, and dreading nothing so much as a return to their native land.

One of these Hessians was, after the Revolution, a frequent visitor at my grandfather's. He was a man of great personal courage, but quite unlettered and extremely superstitious. As he had a store of wonderful tales of "money watchers," elves, and other wonderful beings, he was a great favorite with the children.

The Hessians generally subsided into peaceable, law-abiding citizens, and many respectable families trace to them their origin.

that every man of sense and character detests and despises it."

On the 3d of August an attack was made by six row-galleys upon the *Phœnix* and the *Rose.* The galleys fought for two hours, their crews behaving with the greatest bravery, but they were at last obliged to withdraw, after having done considerable damage to the ships.

"We hope," wrote the commander of the expedition, Colonel Tupper, "to have another touch at those pirates before they leave our river, which God prosper."

The forces of the enemy collected about New York were about thirty thousand men. The American force was rated at seventeen thousand. For the most part they were quite new to service and unacquainted with drill and discipline. One-fourth of them were on the sick list with low fevers and camp dysentery. Others were absent on furlough or in other commands, and the remainder was left to defend posts and stations distributed over several miles of country, and a seaboard open to attack at a score of different points. The sectional differences and jealousies prevailing among the troops from different States added very seriously to Washington's troubles.

"It is with great concern," he says, in one of his general orders, "that the General understands that jealousies have arisen among the troops from the different provinces, and reflections are frequently thrown out which can only tend to irritate each other, and injure the noble cause in which we are engaged, and which

we ought to support with one hand and one heart. The General most earnestly entreats the officers and soldiers to consider the consequences, and that they can in no way assist our enemies more effectually than by making divisions among ourselves; that the honor and success of the army, and the safety of our bleeding country, depend upon harmony and good agreement with each other; that the provinces are all united to oppose the common enemy, and all distinction is sunk in the name of American. To make this name honorable, and preserve the liberty of our country, ought to be our only emulation, and he will be the best soldier and the best patriot who contributes most to this glorious work, whatever be his station, or from whatever part of the continent he may come. Let all distinction of nations, countries and provinces, therefore, be lost in the generous contest who shall behave with the greatest courage against the enemy, and the most kindness and good humor to each other. If there be any officers or soldiers so lost to virtue and a love of their country as to continue in such practices after this order, the General assures them, and is authorized by Congress to declare to the whole army, that such persons shall be severely punished and dismissed from the service in disgrace."

An attack from the fleet was hourly expected, and Washington, by a general order, urged both men and officers to have their arms in readiness at a moment's warning, and not to be out of their encampments, "especially in the morning, or at flood tide." It was thought that the first move of the enemy would be to

take possession of Brooklyn Heights. That once done, another detachment might land above the city, and the army be thus surrounded and cut off in detail.

To defend various points, widely separated from each other, and guard a wide extent of country, was absolutely necessary, if Washington was to maintain his position. As he wrote to Governor Trumbull, he had to oppose an army of thirty thousand experienced veterans with about one-third the number of raw troops, and these scattered about fifteen miles apart, and he asked for militia.

Governor Trumbull responded by an order for fourteen regiments of militia, to march directly to New York. "These regiments," he writes to Washington, "consist of substantial farmers, whose business will require their return as soon as it is safe and convenient to dismiss them."

One significant fact indicates the extreme emergency of the time. The New York Convention, in calling out the militia, to form temporary camps, and to strengthen the post on Long Island, ordered that each man who should have no weapon should bring with him "a shovel, spade or pickaxe, or a scythe, straightened and fixed on a pole."

Washington made his last preparations. All suspected persons were sent away. Some of these feared that their property was to be confiscated and their families ruined, but they were assured that nothing of the sort was intended, and by all that we can gather from Washington's letters, he seems to have treated them with great lenity.

All state papers were packed up, to be sent to Congress. Mrs. Washington was in Philadelphia, and the other ladies of the officers' families were all sent away.

On the 17th of August, Washington heard that troops had been embarked upon the enemy's transports, provisions cooked for three days, and other preparations made which seemed to indicate a departure from Staten Island.

The people in the city were in great anxiety and distress. The terror which Lee had sneered at as "hysterical," moved Washington's compassion, and he wrote as follows to the New York Convention:

"When I consider that the City of New York will in all probability soon be the scene of a bloody conflict, I cannot but view the great number of women, children and infirm persons remaining in it with the most melancholy concern. When the men-of-war passed up the river, the shrieks and cries of these poor creatures, running every way with their children, were truly distressing, and I fear they will have an unhappy effect upon the ears and minds of our young and inexperienced soldiery. Can no method be devised for their removal?"

Without waiting for the action of the Convention, however, he put forth a proclamation advising the non-combatants to remove from the city while they could, and requiring the officers and men to do all in their power to assist the helpless and poor. The Convention seconded his efforts, and a committee was appointed to effect the desired removal as humanely and quickly as possible.

During all these days of anxiety, the *Phœnix* and the *Rose* had been lying quietly in Haverstraw Bay. Two fire-ships, which had been built by Anderson, were sent up the Hudson to attempt their destruction. One grappled the *Phœnix*, but such was the darkness, that she got to the leeward, and was cast off, without injury to the British ship. The other, making for the *Rose*, caught one of the tenders, grappled, and burnt her instead. The plan failed of its main object, but Wallace determined to retreat. His attempts to land had all been repulsed, and with severe loss to the English; and now it appeared that, in addition to the rifle by day, he was to be harassed by fire at night.

The next day, the 18th of August, they made all sail down the river, with a favoring wind. They were struck by cannon balls from the forts, and sustained some injury, but continued their course until they reached Putnam's barricade. A passage had been left open, to be closed in a day or two, and through this passage, guided by a deserter, the vessels made their way, and rejoined the fleet.

CHAPTER XII.

THE BATTLE OF LONG ISLAND.

GENERAL GREENE, with a considerable force under his command, was stationed at Brooklyn. He had carefully acquainted himself with the ground and had his plan of defence. He had intended to occupy a range of wooded hills which, running from southwest to northeast, formed a barrier across the Island. Through these hills there were three passes which it was most important to hold. One on the left of the works, leading eastward through the Bedford hills to the village of Jamaica; a second passing directly from the centre of the lines through the wooded Hills to Flat Bush; and a third on the right, running by Gowanus Cove to the Narrows and Gravesend Bay.

It was impossible to prevent the landing of a force so superior as the British, but Greene had hoped by occupying these passes to keep them at bay.

Most unhappily, however, General Greene was taken ill with a violent fever, and the command fell upon Sullivan, who, just returned from Lake Champlain, had not been able to acquaint himself with the ground.

On the 21st came news that twenty thousand men were to attack Long Island and the Hudson, and that

at the same time other troops were to fall upon Bergen Point, Elizabethtown and Amboy.

On the 22d the British landed at Gravesend about nine thousand men, driving back Colonel Hand's regiment of Pennsylvania riflemen, who had reached the line in safety, after setting fire to the stacks of hay and grain to keep them from the enemy.

Washington thought that the enemy would make a forced march, and fall immediately with overwhelming force upon the lines at Brooklyn. He immediately sent over six battalions as a reinforcement to Sullivan. He could spare no more, for with the next tide the fleet might come up to the attack of the city.

"Be cool, but determined," was Washington's order. "Do not fire at a distance, but wait for orders from your officers. It is the General's express orders that if any man attempts to skulk, lie down, or retreat, without orders, he be instantly shot down as an example. He hopes that no such will be found in the country, but on the contrary, that every one, trusting in the smiles of Heaven in so just a cause, will behave with bravery and resolution."

Most of these men had never been under fire, but Washington says "they went off in high spirits, and that all who were capable of duty evinced the same cheerfulness."

Sir Henry Clinton, who had the chief command, led the first division; Lord Cornwallis, with the reserve, was sent to Flatbush, and the rest of the army extended from the Narrows, near the ferry, through Utrecht and Gravesend to the village of Flatland.

Lord Cornwallis, with Count Donop's corps of Hessians, two battalions of light infantry and six field pieces, came forward swiftly, meaning to seize the central pass through the hills. Hand and his riflemen, who were stationed there, made a gallant defence, and Cornwallis, who had been ordered not to risk an attack, took post that night in the village of Flatland.

Meantime the city was in a state of great alarm and excitement, and the panic was not lessened by the rumor that Washington had resolved if he were driven to retreat to set fire to the town. Washington, as soon as informed of the report, wrote directly to the New York Convention as follows:

"I can assure you, gentlemen, that this report is not founded on the least authority from me. On the contrary, I am so sensible of the value of such a city, and the consequence of its destruction to many worthy citizens and their families, that nothing but the last necessity, and such as would justify me to the whole world, would induce me to give orders to that purpose."

There were constant applications to Washington for safeguards, and as he went about the town he was beset by women with their children entreating to be sent away from danger. He was kind and patient with all, and wrote once more to the New York Convention urging the removal of these helpless people, many of whom had not the means to leave the city.

On the 24th, Washington crossed over to Brooklyn, and found, with concern, that there was some disorder in the American lines, owing partly, no doubt, to the continued illness of General Greene.

On returning to the city, he sent over General Putnam to take the command. Putnam hurried over to his post. He had been "quite miserable" at being kept away from the front. The next day, August 25th, Washington wrote to him censuring "the scattering, unmeaning and wasteful fire, which not only wasted ammunition, but prevented deserters from coming in, and he exhorted the officers to do their utmost to put down plundering and all disorderly and licentious practices."

"Men," he says, "who are not employed as mere hirelings, but have stepped forth in defence of everything that is dear and valuable, not only to themselves but to posterity, should take uncommon pains to conduct themselves with the greatest propriety and good order."

The British, meanwhile, had augmented their forces, which were now divided into three bodies. The Hessians, under De Heister, formed the centre at the village of Flatbush. General Grant commanded the left wing opposed to Lord Stirling, and the right wing, which was to act the most important part in the battle, was formed of chosen battalions under the command of Clinton, Cornwallis, Percy, and Lord Howe himself.

Washington sent over Colonel Haslet's fine Delaware regiment, which was united to Stirling's brigade. These troops were among the best equipped and best disciplined in the service, and were stationed in the place of danger outside the lines.

Washington spent the 26th in Brooklyn. There were many movements among the enemy's troops, and their

number was increased. Washington remained all day in consultation with Putnam, who as yet had not been able to make himself acquainted with the exact position of his fortified posts, or the defiles of the confused mass of wooded hills which covered the site of the present city. It was evident that a general attack was at hand, and there was every reason to think that the fleet would act in concert with the army, and assail New York.

He returned to the city full of care and anxiety.

According to the plan concerted by Lord Howe, Sir Henry Clinton, with his division, moved from Flatland on the evening of the 26th, and, guided by a Tory, arrived within half a mile of the pass through the Bedford Hills—a pass which, once gained, commanded the whole position, and enabled the British to get possession of the Jamaica road, and outflank the Americans on the left.

So silently was the march conducted, that no alarm was given to Putnam and his men. Expecting to find the Bedford Pass strongly protected, the British had halted, and were preparing for an attack, when an unlucky patrol, falling into their hands, betrayed the fact that the pass had been left unguarded, and that, beyond Bedford, the whole Jamaica road was occupied only by a few light volunteers.

Sir Henry Clinton at once secured his advantage, and by the first dawn had taken possession of the heights, and was within three miles of Bedford. Here, as yet unseen and unheard by the Americans, he halted to refresh his men.

In the meantime, at the other extremity of the lines, Grant was keeping Lord Stirling busy. He had been ordered not to bring on a general action until he should hear that Clinton's movement had been successfully made, and the two divisions exchanged cannon-shot and volleys of musketry without coming to closer quarters.

De Heister, in the centre, followed the same plan, and, without advancing, kept up a sharp cannonade on Sullivan's men. Meanwhile five ships of war were seen beating up the bay, to the great terror of the city. The wind was adverse, however, and only one of the vessels was able to get near enough to open a fire on the fort at Red Hook, thus still more distracting the attention of the Americans from Clinton's advance.

Washington, seeing that the city was in no immediate danger, crossed over to Brooklyn, and taking horse, galloped up to the works.

Scarcely had he arrived, when the roar of artillery from Bedford gave notice that the enemy had gained a fatal advantage.

No sooner were Sir Henry's guns heard, than the Hessians rushed forward and stormed the redoubt.

Sullivan, seeing that he was in danger of being surrounded, ordered a retreat to the lines, but it was too late. He had hardly reached the plain, when he was met by the British infantry and dragoons, and driven back into the woods. Now began a scene of horrible slaughter. The Americans were shut in between the British and the Hessians. They fought with desperate but, alas! with useless courage.

The Hessians had been told that the Americans, if successful, would murder them all, and, under this persuasion, they gave no quarter. The Highlanders were equally merciless.

"Our Hessians and our brave Highlanders gave no quarter," wrote an officer of the British 71st, "and *it was a fine sight to see* with what alacrity they despatched the rebels with their bayonets, *after we had surrounded them, so that they could not resist.*"

Some few of the Americans, with desperate courage, cut their way through, and reached the lines. The greater part, however, were either slain or taken prisoners, and among the latter was Sullivan.

Grant, in the meantime, had been exchanging fire with Stirling, waiting, like De Heister, to hear of Clinton's advance.

Washington saw the danger to which Stirling's men were exposed, but too late to give warning. Standing on a hill within the lines, he saw, through his glass, that Cornwallis was marching down in the rear, by a cross-road, to place the Americans between two fires. Stirling's men, who had been for four hours sustaining the cannonade, believed that the enemy did not dare to advance, and were in high spirits.

But they were soon undeceived by Clinton's cannon, thundering between them and the lines. Stirling attempted to retreat, but he was met on the swampy ground near Gowanus Creek by Cornwallis and his grenadiers, while Grant, seeing that his time was come, pushed forward, and at once took Colonel Atlee prisoner.

Stirling attacked Cornwallis fiercely, with half of Smallwood's brigade, thus covering the retreat of the other half over the swampy ground and the creek. These arrived in safety, drenched with mud and water, but bringing some prisoners and their standard, torn and tattered with shot, but still their own.

The fight between Stirling and Cornwallis was but a repetition of what had already taken place. Stirling ordered a Maryland officer to retreat, if possible, with a part of his remaining men, and force their way to the camp. This detachment fell in with a party of the enemy, who made signs that they would surrender as prisoners, and when they had decoyed the Americans within sixty yards, fired into their ranks. With such fierceness was this treacherous fire returned, that the British officer and his men who had resorted to such an unworthy artifice were driven back on the main body.

A desperate struggle ensued. The Americans, surrounded and overwhelmed with numbers, rallied to the attack again and again, but all in vain. Some few made their escape, but the greater part were killed. More than two hundred and fifty men perished in this deadly fight, within sight of the lines.

Washington, looking on, wrung his hands in anguish. "Good God!" he cried; "what brave fellows I must this day lose!"

Lord Stirling had been in the fore-front of the battle, acting the part of a brave and good officer. When all hope was over, he sought out the German

commander, De Heister, and surrendered to him his sword.*

Washington, seeing that the enemy were drawing their forces together, now prepared for a desperate defence, for the grenadiers were actually within two hundred yards of the redoubt.

To his surprise, however, the English generals checked the advance of their victorious troops, and drawing them off to a hollow way, out of reach of musketry, encamped for the night, and the disastrous day was over.

The American loss in killed, wounded and prisoners, was nearly two thousand—a large proportion, as only five thousand were engaged. The loss on the side of the British was only about three hundred and eighty.

The defeat was partly owing to General Greene's absence from the ground he had thoroughly explored;

* Lord Stirling probably had his own reasons for choosing to give up to De Heister rather than to the English commander. His father, George Alexander, was heir to the earldom of Stirling, in Scotland. He was concerned in the Stuart rising in 1715, and fled to this country for his life. He married and settled in New York, and his son William Alexander was secretary to Governor Shirley. After his father's death, William Alexander attempted in vain to have his right to the earldom recognized. He was unsuccessful; but though he did not recover his estate, he was commonly addressed by his title. He came back to this country in 1761, and was a warm Whig. His grandson, W. L. Duer, in his "Life of Lord Stirling," says that this very General Grant declared, in his grandfather's hearing, in the House of Commons, "that Americans would not fight," and that he would march from one end of the continent to the other with five thousand men.

but the fatal error lay in neglecting to guard the Jamaica road, by which Clinton cut off the troops from their own lines and hemmed them in, to fall a prey to a cross-fire and the Hessian bayonets.

Irving comments on the battle as follows:

"This able and fatal scheme of the enemy might have been thwarted had the army been provided with a few troops of light horse to serve as videttes. With these to scour the roads and bring intelligence, the night march of Sir Henry Clinton, so decisive of the fortunes of the day, could hardly have failed to be discovered and reported. The Connecticut horsemen, therefore, ridiculed by the Southerners for their homely equipments, sneered at as useless, and dismissed for standing on their dignity and privilege as troopers, might, if retained, have saved the army from being surprised and severed, its advance-guards routed, and those very Southerners cut up, captured, and almost annihilated." *

* Irving's Life of Washington, Vol. II. ch. 31.

CHAPTER XIII

RETREAT FROM LONG ISLAND.

THE night after the battle was a most trying one to the Americans. They were worn out and dispirited, and many of them were sick or wounded. Washington says, in his dispatch of the 29th, that his men had not tents to cover them, that the weather was wet and cold, and the soldiers almost broken down.

Washington was up all night, and at four in the morning he made the rounds, speaking words of cheer and encouragement.

The morning broke dark and cold. To his great relief, Washington saw that it was General Howe's intention to make regular approaches instead of storming the works. Howe was probably ignorant of his enemy's weakness, and time was given to Washington to carry out his plans.

Early in the morning General Mifflin came over, bringing two Pennsylvania regiments, which were reckoned among the best in the service—Colonel Shee's and Colonel Magaw's. The two, however, were so reduced by sickness, that together they numbered only eight hundred men. With Mifflin also came Colonel Glover's five hundred men from Marblehead, a fine body of fishermen and sailors, dressed in a sort of naval

uniform of blue jackets and trousers. This regiment soon rendered most efficient service. The arrival of these troops did something to encourage the soldiers dispirited by the unfortunate issue of the yesterday's fight.

As the day advanced, the British opened a cannonade upon the American works, and were proceeding with their intrenchments, when a pouring rain obliged them to withdraw to their tents. There were skirmishes through the day, but nothing decisive took place, though the Americans held their own. Toward night, the British began to intrench themselves within five hundred yards of the American lines, but the night came down and passed, without any farther advance on the part of Lord Howe, though he had on the ground a force of twenty thousand men and more than forty pieces of cannon.*

On the morning of the 29th, a thick fog covered the island. In the course of the morning, General Mifflin, with two other officers, rode to the western outposts, near Red Hook.

A light breeze blew aside the fog for a few moments, and it was seen that there was an unusual movement

* The author of the "Pictorial History of the Reign of George the Third" complains bitterly of Lord Howe's apathy. He says that the troops were kept digging trenches on one side, while Washington was smuggling his men out on the other. The "high-feeding English general slept on," and "his brother, the admiral, did not move a ship or boat."

General Howe, notwithstanding, received the honors of knighthood from the King, the ceremony being performed by the German Knyphausen, Clinton and Robertson, in November, 1776.

among the enemy's fleet lying off Staten Island. Boats were passing to and fro from the admiral's ship, carrying orders, as if the fleet was about to change its station. Mifflin and Reed, who formed one of the party, surmised that the ships were to move up and anchor in the East River, in which case the troops on Long Island would be in a perfect trap.

The officers hurried back at full speed to the camp, to urge that the army should be withdrawn as soon as possible. Reed carried the news, and the opinion of himself and his companions, directly to the Commander-in-chief.

A council of war was at once called, in the Old Stone Dutch Church.* Taking into consideration the danger that the troops might be cut off from the city by the fleet, and the difficulty of defending lines so extensive with the forces at their command, against the greatly superior strength of the enemy, the council decided to abandon Long Island entirely. It was resolved that the army should be conveyed across that very night.

The retreat required the greatest care and secrecy. Nine thousand men, with their stores and arms, were to withdraw from before an overwhelming and victorious force, encamped so near that every sound made on one side could be heard distinctly on the other. Moreover, the retiring force must embark, and cross a strait three-quarters of a mile wide. The least alarm would bring the enemy down upon the weary and harassed Americans.

* This church stood at what is now the corner of Fulton and Flatbush Avenues.

With swiftness and secrecy Washington made his preparations. Orders were sent to Colonel Hughes, the quartermaster general, to impress all water craft, from Spyt den Duivel to Hell Gate, and have them ready by evening, on the east side of the city. The order was executed with promptness, and by eight o'clock that evening the little fleet was assembled, and put in charge of Colonel Glover and his sailor regiment.

Orders were issued to the troops, as if they were to prepare for a night attack on the British. They were greatly surprised, for their arms were nearly useless with the wet, and they themselves were almost worn out. Many made verbal wills, as is the custom in the army, entrusting to each other their last wishes.

General Mifflin was ordered to remain in the works, with the remnants of Haslet's, Smallwood's and Hand's regiments, and the Pennsylvanians, until the main body should have set sail. Then he was to march quickly to the ferry, and embark immediately.

It was late at night when the Americans began to retire from their works as quietly as possible. As one regiment moved away from its place, the troops at its right and left moved up to fill the vacancy.

In silence and order the retreat went on. Young Alexander Hamilton brought up the rear. Suddenly, in the anxious hush, a cannon went off with a loud roar. Whether the gun went off as it was spiked, or whether it was fired with treacherous intent, it failed to rouse the British.

The embarkation began about midnight, at the foot

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Retreat from Long Island. p. 227.

of Fulton Street, Brooklyn, and was conducted with wonderful swiftness and stillness, under the direct supervision of the Commander-in-chief, who stood at the ferry superintending every move.

Long, indeed, must have seemed the hours of that wet, dark night, to Washington, as he stood there on the shore, while the fate of his little army hung trembling in the balance.

He knew that his camp had been surrounded by Tories and spies. It was more than probable that the gathering of the little fleet by the quartermaster general had been observed and reported to the enemy, who might at that moment, in the darkness, be close upon Mifflin and his men, who were too few to defend the works. Any moment he might expect to hear the English guns thundering from the heights. The brutal mercenaries, flushed with their victory, might pour down upon the ferry, and take the retreating troops at fatal disadvantage.

In his eagerness to hasten the embarkation, he sent his aid, Colonel Scammel, to hurry the march of the troops already on the way.

The Colonel made a mistake, and carried the order to Mifflin, who, supposing that the other regiments had crossed, gathered his men together, and came down to the ferry with all haste.

Just then the tide had turned. There were not row boats enough to carry the soldiers, and the sail boats could not make head against the wind and the now opposing current. There was some confusion at the ferry, and at that moment Mifflin arrived, with the

whole of his men, adding to the embarrassment and the growing uproar, which, if heard in the British lines, would destroy everything.

"Good God! General Mifflin!" said Washington, greatly alarmed; "I fear you have ruined us by so unseasonably withdrawing the troops from the lines."

"I did it by your order," said Mifflin, warmly.

"It cannot be," said Washington.

"I did," was the short answer. "Did Scammel act as aid-de-camp for the day, or did he not?"

"He did."

"Then I had orders through him," said Mifflin.

"It is a dreadful mistake," said Washington, "and unless the troops can regain their lines before their absence is discovered, the most dreadful consequences are to be apprehended."

Mifflin said no more. He gave his orders on the instant and led his troops back to the lines, which they regained and occupied undiscovered by the British. They had been left unguarded for three-quarters of an hour, and it seems little short of a miracle that, near as the British were, so large a body should have been able to withdraw and return to their posts without betraying their movements to an enemy whose sentries were actually within sound of voice.

All night long the Marblehead men labored with sail and oar. The breeze, which had at first been adverse, became favorable, and the fog which still hung thick on Long Island cleared up on the New York side, enabling the boats to shape their course to the wharves with certainty. Troops, arms, ammuni-

tion, horses, provisions, and all the guns but a few of the heaviest, were safely carried across, and, last of all, Mifflin and his soldiers left their posts once more, their retreat still unnoticed, and marching to the ferry, were safely embarked. The last boat brought over Washington, who had refused to move till all his army had crossed in safety. It seems unaccountable that these movements should have been effected without attracting the attention of the enemy.

A Mrs. Rapelye, a lady of the Tory persuasion, discovered the embarkation, and sent her negro servant away in haste, with orders to tell the news to the first British officer he could find. The negro fell in with a Hessian detachment. The officer could not understand him. It is not impossible that this colored person took no particular pains to be understood. The Hessian officer put him under guard. He remained a prisoner till daybreak, when an English officer visiting the post questioned him, and was amazed at his story.

The alarm was given; the troops were called to arms. A cautious approach was made to the American lines. They were found completely deserted. Parties were at once hurried down to the ferry, and, as if some "spirit of the mist" had sympathized with the patriot cause, the friendly fog which had covered the Americans as they embarked lifted just far enough to show to the English and Hessians, Washington with the rear boats more than half way over the river.

The British only succeeded in taking two thieves who had stayed behind to plunder.

Howe was extremely mortified, for he had never imagined that escape was possible.

The masterly manner in which this retreat was conducted added much to Washington's military reputation.

In his dispatch informing Congress of events on Long Island, Washington says:

"Since Monday scarce any of us have been out of the lines till our passage across the East River was effected yesterday morning, and for forty-eight hours preceding that I had hardly been off my horse, and never closed my eyes, so that I was quite unfit to write or dictate till this morning."*

* The author of the History of the Reign of George III. says that "Washington kept his person safe in New York." Accessible as are the dispatches on both sides, it is difficult to believe that this assertion is ignorance and not falsehood.

CHAPTER XIV.

RETREAT FROM NEW YORK.

THE situation of Washington and his army was now most critical and distressing.

The works at Brooklyn were filled with British and Hessian soldiers, as were the points commanding the entrances to the harbor. Admiral Howe's fleet lay near Governor's Island, within cannon-shot of New York.

On the night of Monday, September 2d, a forty-gun ship passed the strait between Governor's Island and Long Island, ran the batteries unharmed, and reaching Turtle Bay, just above the city, anchored there. Major Crane, however, posted artillery at the high bank near to what is now Forty-sixth street, and obliged her to run for shelter east of Blackwell's Island. Other vessels of war, with several transports, sailed around Long Island, and made their appearance in the upper part of the sound.

The spirits of the army were at the lowest ebb. The system of depending upon militia, enlisted only for short terms, brought forth the usual consequences.

"Great numbers have gone off," writes Washington to Congress on the 2d of September, "in some in-

stances by whole regiments, by half ones, and by companies at a time."

Putting the case mildly enough, he goes on to say that this conduct, opposed as they were to a powerful enemy, would be "sufficiently disagreeable," but that their example injured the discipline of the whole force.

"I am persuaded," he says, "and as fully convinced as I am of any one fact that has happened, that our liberties must be greatly hazarded if their defence is left to any but a permanent standing army—I mean one to exist during the war. Men who have been free, and subject to no control, cannot be reduced to order in an instant, and the privileges and exemptions which they claim, and will have, influence the conduct of others, and the aid derived by them is nearly counterbalanced by the disorder, irregularity and confusion that they occasion." Again and again Washington urged upon Congress the necessity of enlisting men for longer terms, thereby obviating the trouble attending the constant change of number in his army, the disorder occasioned by their return home as soon as they had learned the duty and discipline of soldiers, and also the expense and waste of the system.

While almost driven to despair by the difficulties attendant on the militia system, he at the same time makes every allowance for the men:

"Men just dragged from the tender scenes of domestic life, totally unacquainted with every kind of military skill, which is followed by a want of confidence in themselves when opposed to troops regularly trained,

superior in knowledge and superior in arms, are timid, and ready to fly at their own shadows. Besides, the sudden change in their manner of living brings on an unconquerable desire to return home."

Moreover, many of these men had left their families almost at a moment's warning, and knew that in their absence their wives and children were suffering for the necessaries of life; and the soldiers from the northern counties dreaded every day to hear that the Indians had fallen upon their homes. Nor were the hard-working farmers and mechanics the only ones who felt this "unconquerable desire." The well-provided regiments from across the Delaware were in quite as great a hurry to go back; and Reed speaks with bitter contempt of the Philadelphia gentlemen who came over "on visits, and on the first cannon-shot went off in a most violent hurry."

Rumors of dissension among the rebels were rife in the British camp, and that British correspondent who has during this whole century informed his friends at home of the ruin of the Union was in lively spirits.

There had been a terrible fray in New York between the New Englanders and the other troops. The New Englanders had been determined to plunder the town and burn it, and a battle had taken place, in which many lives had been lost. "Mr. Washington" had ordered away the New York troops from the city, and had been minded to replace them by Connecticut troops, in order that he might burn the town. The New Yorkers, however, had mutinied, had refused to go, and had carried their point. Matters were

going "swimmingly," and "this distressful business" was soon to be brought to a happy end.

In spite of the self-evident fact that the militia system was a failure, Congress had a deep-rooted and very natural distrust of a standing army. It hesitated to place the necessary powers in Washington's hands, lest he should make himself a king.

Washington, however, in all his dispatches preserves his self-control, and again and again lays the state of affairs before that body, in a manner which speaks volumes for his inexhaustible patience, perseverance and devotion to the cause.

If he spoke of his personal feelings fully to any one, it was to his "dearest Patsey," as he called Mrs. Washington; but those letters were never read by any one but herself, and before her death she destroyed them all but the one which he wrote to her on taking command of the army.

Among other important questions which were pressing upon Washington's mind, was one of the gravest nature. If he were forced to abandon New York, should the town be suffered to remain as winter quarters for the enemy, or should he adopt the extreme measure of destroying it?

He laid this question before Congress, and they at once decided that the city in any event must be preserved, as even should it fall into the hands of the British, no doubt was entertained of its recovery.

Meanwhile the desertions continued, and in a few days the Connecticut militia was reduced from six thousand to two thousand. A thousand men were

drawn from Mercer's flying camp, but the ammunition taken away by the departing militia was a serious loss.

Washington caused all the sick and wounded to be removed to Orangetown, in New Jersey, and sent away such stores and baggage as could be spared from present use to Dobbs' Ferry, about twenty-two miles above the city.

A fort, called Fort Constitution was begun on the Jersey shore, opposite Fort Washington. This was intended to protect on that side General Putnam's chevaux-de-frise, which, though it had so signally failed at its first trial, its inventor still trusted would be effectual in preventing the passage of ships up and down the Hudson.

While the Americans were as yet undecided whether to advance or retreat, Lord Howe, who was sincerely desirous of peace, made advances to Congress, through General Sullivan, who was despatched on his parole to Philadelphia. His lordship said that he was desirous of a conference with some members of Congress. He could consider them only as private gentlemen, but if in the conference any terms of peace should be agreed upon, in order to render such an arrangement valid, the authority of Congress would be recognized. After much hesitation, Congress, on the 6th of September, chose a committee composed of John Adams, Edward Rutledge, and Dr. Franklin. Dr. Franklin had been personally acquainted with Lord Howe in England, and they had held many conversations on American affairs at the house of his lordship's sister in London.

While the committee were on their way to meet Lord Howe, Washington and his officers were trying to make a choice among the many difficulties by which they were surrounded. They were placed, as Reed expressively says, "between hawk and buzzard."

It was evident from the movements of Lord Howe's troops that the design of the British was to shut in the Americans on the island of New York, and force them either to fight or surrender at discretion. In the state of the American army, there was no hope of success in a pitched battle. Everything tended to show that the war on the side of the States should be mainly defensive.

"Being fully persuaded," says Washington, "that it would be presumption to draw out our young troops into open ground against their superiors, both in numbers and discipline, I have never spared the spade and pick-axe."

On the 7th of September, a council of war was held, to discuss the question of defending or evacuating the city. Putnam and Greene were strongly in favor of evacuation. Putnam urged, with truth, that the extremities of the army were sixteen miles apart; that it might easily be cut off in detail, and that by removing from a post which might be attacked on all sides by a hostile fleet, they would deprive the enemy of the great advantage of his ships.

Greene argued that the city of New York was not an object to be compared with the safety of all America. He urged an immediate removal, and, moreover, was strongly in favor of burning the town.

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Lord Howe and the Committee. p. 237.

Congress threw the whole responsibility upon Washington, and, after much discussion, all the officers, with the exception of Heath, Spencer, and Clinton, decided that the evacuation of New York was a matter of absolute necessity.

Meantime, the meeting between Lord Howe and the Congressional Committee had taken place at a house on Staten Island. Lord Howe treated the Commissioners with great courtesy, and offered to leave a British officer of distinction within the lines as a hostage. The Commissioners, however, declined such a pledge, having entire confidence in Lord Howe's good faith.

As might have been expected, the conference was fruitless. Lord Howe could only offer pardon, if the colonies should return to Great Britain, and could not even promise redress for the oppression of which they had first complained.*

The Americans maintained that they needed no pardon, and that the colonies, having decided for independence, Congress had no power, even if it possessed the will, to make them again into dependencies. No agreement was possible upon these terms, and the confer-

* William Howe's acceptance of the command in America greatly displeased his constituents at Nottingham, who thought he had broken faith with them. "You should have refused to go," said many of them, "and if you go, we hope you may fail." Howe's ideas of the Americans and their temper and their wrongs were strangely mistaken. "When they find," he said, in his letter to his constituents, "that they are not supported in their frantic ideas by the more moderate, they will, from *fear of punishment*, subside to the laws."—*Bigelow's Franklin*, Vol. II. p. 367.

ence ended. Lord Howe, at parting, said, what doubtless he really felt, that he should suffer great pain in being obliged to distress those for whom he felt so much regard.

"I feel thankful to your lordship," replied Franklin, who never in his life was at a loss for an answer. "The Americans will endeavor to lessen the pain you may feel, by taking good care of themselves."

The meeting had one good effect. Many had entertained the notion that, if Congress chose, peace might yet be had on honorable terms, and that Lord Howe had been entrusted with secret powers to adjust all differences on a basis of justice to the colonies.

The conference, however, showed that Howe had no other terms to offer than unconditional surrender, and those among the patriot party who were most inclined to the "mother country" were convinced that no other course was open than to make a stand for independence.

On the 13th of September, four vessels of war sailed up the East River, toward Hell Gate, keeping up a constant fire as they went, and one of the balls struck within six feet of Washington, as he was riding into the fort. It was clear that the British were trying to surround New York.

"It is now a trial of skill, whether they will or not," wrote Reed to his wife, "and every night we lie down with the most anxious fears for the fate of to-morrow."

On the 14th, Washington's baggage was removed to King's Bridge, at the head of the island, and at sunset

of the same day two more ships passed, and joined those already in the sound.

Immediately afterward, two expresses came flying with the news that the British were crossing, at Hell Gate, to the islands at the mouth of Harlem River, where they already had an encampment. Washington instantly mounted and rode to Harlem Heights, but the night passed without an attack. The next day, however, three ships of war passed up the Hudson as far as Bloomingdale, where they came to anchor, and effectually prevented the removal of stores, by water, to Dobbs' Ferry.

A cannonade on the breastworks between Turtle Bay and the city was begun, and, under cover of the fire, a long procession of boats, filled with British soldiers, came filing out from between the wooded banks of Newtown Inlet, crossing the East River to the points between Turtle Bay and Kip's Bay.

The soldiers were all standing erect, with their arms glittering in the sunshine, and their array was as gallant as that of the Americans was worn and tattered.

The militia, who manned the breastworks, and two brigades of Putnam's troops, sent to reinforce them, were seized with panic, and ran away at full speed.

At this moment the Commander-in-chief came flying up on horseback. Rushing into the midst of the confusion, he tried in vain to rally the runaways, but the panic-terror which sometimes falls even on the most veteran troops had taken full possession of the men, and all his efforts were vain.

At the first sight of sixty or seventy of the enemy,

they broke ranks and fled like sheep. For once Washington lost control of himself.

Overcome with wrath, grief and shame, he dashed his hat on the ground; he snapped his pistols at the runaways, and menaced others with his drawn sword.

"Are these the men," he cried, "with whom I am to defend America?" and then, as if he were beside himself, he spurred forward bare-headed, sword in hand, alone, against the advancing enemy.

He was within about eighty yards of the British column, when one of his aids, dashing after him, caught his rein, and actually forced his commander off the field.

Soon, however, Washington recovered his self-command, and took instant measures against the pressing danger. The enemy could easily take possession of Harlem Heights, in the centre of the island, and thus cut off the retreat of the lower division, under Putnam, and divide the army. He sent orders to the forces above to take possession of the Heights, and despatched an express to Putnam, ordering an immediate retreat from the city to the same position.

Had the enemy pressed their advance, and extended their lines across the island, or seized upon the Heights, these orders could not have been carried out; but, with the strange supineness which had marked their behavior on Long Island, they neglected their advantage. The main body rested on their arms, while only a detachment was sent down the road to the city leading along the East River.

It was a moment of extreme peril. Had Washington's orders reached a less energetic commander than

Putnam, the lower divisions of the army might have been hopelessly entrapped. The gallant "Old Put," as his men called him, lost not an instant. He called in his pickets and his guards, leaving behind great quantities of stores and most of the heavy cannon, which their was no time to remove or destroy. To their dismay, Putnam and Knox learned that the enemy occupied the east and middle roads to Harlem, and they knew of no other among the woods and swamps that then covered the upper part of the island. Happily, however, Araon Burr, who then acted as Putnam's aid, knew the ground, and led the troops by a track through the woods to the Bloomingdale road. It was a forced and hurried march. The day was hot, the dust rose in clouds, and they were exposed to the fire of the enemy's ships on the Hudson. With the army were women and children, and every description of baggage hastily snatched up. Many were overcome with weariness and thirst; some died from drinking cold water; but there could be no pause till the Heights were reached.

Putnam rode to and fro along the line, hurrying every one forward. Colonel Humphreys, a volunteer in the division, says:

"I had frequent opportunities that day of beholding him, for the purpose of issuing orders and encouraging the troops, flying on his horse, covered with foam, wherever his presence was most necessary. Without his extraordinary exertions, the guard must have been inevitably lost, and it is probable that the entire corps would have been cut to pieces.

"When we were not far from Bloomingdale, an aid de camp came to him at full speed, to inform him that a column of British infantry was descending upon our right. Our rear was soon fired upon, and the colonel of our regiment, whose order was just communicated for the front to file off to the left, was killed on the spot. With no other loss, we rejoined the army after dark upon the Heights of Harlem."

Putnam's energy might perhaps only have hurried the ruin of his corps, had it not been that the British generals, in passing Murray Hill, the residence of a patriotic member of the Society of Friends, stopped to ask for some refreshment. Mr. Murray was absent, but the lady of the house received them with great politeness, and set before them cake and wine and fruit in abundance.

The British generals found their fare and their quarters so agreeable, that they lingered over the table, drinking wine and bantering Mrs. Murray about the utter rout of her countrymen. The lady, who knew how precious was every moment, kept her temper, and pressed her unwelcome guests with tempting refreshments, to such good purpose, that when the British generals at last bestirred themselves, Putnam and his men had passed by within a mile, escaping only by a few minutes from the closing of the enemy's line, extending from one river to the other. Putnam's division had been given up as lost by the army at Harlem. They passed a most wretched night, thus described by Colonel Humphreys: "Our soldiers excessively fatigued by the sultry march of the day,

their clothes wet by a severe shower of rain that succeeded toward the evening, their blood chilled by the cold wind, that produced a sudden change in the temperature of the air, and their hearts sunk within them by the loss of baggage, artillery, and works in which they had been taught to place great confidence, lay upon their arms, covered only by the clouds of an uncomfortable sky." The British army took possession of New York. All Whigs who could escape had left the city, and now all Tories who were able returned to it. The houses of the principal Whig gentlemen became quarters for British generals.* The churches were taken for barracks, for riding-schools, prisons, and other military purposes, those belonging to the Presbyterians being specially selected, as the members of that persuasion were supposed, and with good reason, to be particularly hostile to the king.

The American army was now gathered within its fortified camp on the neck of land which forms the upper part of Manhattan Island. This neck of land is not anywhere more than a mile wide. It is a line of rocky hills, and is parted from the mainland by

* Prince William Henry, afterward William the Fourth, who was then a little midshipman, was at the Beekman House, under charge of Admiral Digby. He seems to have been as careless of ceremony then as when, after he came to the throne, he scandalized Mr. Greville by going early to bed and "dropping" the King of Hanover at his hotel. Whenever he could, he would escape from his guardian, and play and skate with the city boys, both black and white, on the Collect pond, where the father of the poet Halleck, a decided Tory, saved his royal highness from drowning in an air hole.

Harlem river, a narrow strait which extends from Hell Gate, on the sound, to Spyt den Duivel creek, an inlet from the Hudson. Spyt den Duivel was crossed by King's Bridge, then the only passage from the island to the mainland. About two miles south of King's Bridge, and upon a rocky height, was Fort Washington, overlooking the Hudson. Opposite to the Americans, about a mile and a half from their advanced posts, were the British lines, and between the camps was an open plain.

Washington had his headquarters at the house of Colonel Roger Morris, who had been his companion in Braddock's campaign. Morris had married Washington's youthful love, Miss Mary Philipse. Both the Colonel and his wife were royalists, and had withdrawn to the house of Beverly Robinson, in the Highlands. The house commands a fine view of Harlem river, the village, Long Island, the sound, and the plains of Harlem, so that from his headquarters the Commander could watch the movements of the enemy.

Washington busied his men continually in strengthening the fortifications, and it was while these works were in progress that he first made the acquaintance of Alexander Hamilton, then a young captain of artillery.

On the morning of the 14th, the most advanced post was attacked by a strong body of the enemy. It was gallantly defended by the brave Colonel Knowlton and his men, who, however, were finally driven in, and the outposts fell into the hands of the British forces—a battalion of light infantry, another of Highlanders, and three companies of Hessian riflemen.

While Reed and Washington were consulting as to whether succor should be sent to Knowlton's men, the British came into full view, and, as Reed informs us, "sounded their bugles in the most insulting manner, as is usual after a fox chase. I never felt such a sensation before. It seemed to crown our disgrace."

Washington's spirit was moved by the insult. He resolved that something should be done at all hazards to encourage the spirits of the troops. Three companies, under Major Leitch, were ordered to join Knowlton's rangers. These troops were to get in the rear of the enemy, while a pretended attack was ordered in front.

These orders were executed, except that the enemy, changing their position, Knowlton and Leitch fell upon them in flank instead of on the rear. A hot conflict ensued, in which Knowlton and Leitch were both mortally wounded. Undismayed, however, Connecticut and Virginia fought on, side by side, drove the enemy into the plain, and pursued them with ardor until, the retreat being sounded, they retired in good order.

"Have we driven the enemy?" asked Colonel Knowlton, with his last breath, and learning that his men had behaved with spirit, and put the British soldiers to rout in the open field, he was satisfied.

The British loss was somewhat greater than the American in numbers, but the numbers were more than balanced by the death of two such officers as Knowlton and Leitch.

Trifling as was the advantage gained, it had a great effect on the spirits of the army. It was the first gleam

of success in a long career of defeat and failure, and both the men and their commander were encouraged.

The troops who had taken part in the struggle were thanked and praised in the general order, and their gallantry was forcibly contrasted with the behavior of the runaways at Kip's Bay, whom Washington seems to have found it very hard to forgive, and Knowlton and Leitch were duly honored.

On the night of the 20th of September, a great fire broke out in New York, and its light was seen from Washington's camp. All that night, it seemed as if the sky were on fire, so bright was the blaze, and in the morning great columns of smoke continued to rise. Out of the four thousand dwelling-houses which at that day made New York, nearly five hundred had been consumed. The British charged the Americans with the destruction of the town, but it is well known that the fire broke out accidentally in a low drinking place, near Whitehall Slip. The wind was high; there were many wooden buildings, and no fire engines, so that it is no wonder that the fire had made great headway before it was finally checked by the exertions of the British soldiers and the sailors from the fleet.

Several persons were seized as incendiaries, and one unfortunate house-carpenter, White by name, who was a violent Tory, and somewhat given to drink, was hung on a lamp-post without examination as to whether he were friend or foe.

General Howe, in his dispatches, says that several men were caught in the act, and "killed by the enraged troops;" but it is quite possible that the soldiers

may have been no better judges in other cases than they were in the case of poor carpenter White.

While the British and American forces lay opposite to each other, and while the British were bringing up their heavy cannon, in preparation for a general attack with their fleet and army, there took place in New York one of the noblest tragedies in our history. Captain Nathan Hale, of Coventry, Conn., was a young gentleman of great promise, and had distinguished himself at Yale College, where he graduated in 1773. He was not twenty-one when, on the breaking out of the war, he received a commission in Knowlton's regiment.

After the evacuation of Long Island, it became a matter of great importance to know the strength of the British, their movements and plans. They could be learned only by some one who would take his life in his hands, and go into the heart of the enemy's camp.

Hale, learning what was required, immediately volunteered, was made known to Washington by Knowlton, and received his directions. He had an order to all American armed vessels to convey him wherever he should wish to go, and he crossed the Sound, and arrived at Huntington about the middle of September. He reached Brooklyn, took observations of the enemy's works, and acquired much valuable information concerning their numbers and plans. He then returned to Huntington. While he waited for a passage, a boat came ashore from a British vessel, the *Cerberus*, then lying in the Sound. Hale took the boat for one which

he was expecting, and it is said that on board there was a Tory relative of his own, who instantly pointed him out as a rebel.

He was sent to Howe, at New York, and, without any pretence of a trial, was delivered into the hands of the Provost-Marshal, Cunningham, a man whose name is still infamous in this country, on account of his brutalities to our prisoners.

It is the usage of war to put spies to death, and it is nothing to Howe's discredit that Hale was hung; but there is no excuse for the cruelty and insult with which the unfortunate gentleman was treated in his last moments.

He was refused the consolation allowed to the meanest criminal. He asked in vain for the services of a clergymen. He was not even allowed to have a Bible. The sole indulgence allowed him was to write to his family. On the morning of the 21st of September, 1776, he was hung upon an apple-tree in Rutger's orchard.* His last words were: "I only regret that I have but one life to give to my country."

He was buried where he was put to death, and afterwards the Provost-Marshal destroyed the letter Hale had written to his mother and sisters, because he said: "The rebels should never know that they had a man in their army who could die with such firmness."

This cruel precaution, however, was useless, for the Americans soon learned the story, and the nation has ever since honored his name, as that of a patriot and a martyr.

*It was near the corner of East Broadway and Market Street.

From the Heights of Harlem, Washington wrote to Congress his celebrated letter of the 24th of September. He had again and again stated the disadvantages attending the system of short enlistments. Most men having made the same statement ten or fifteen times over, to a body like Congress, without effect, would either have given up in despair or flown into a passion. Washington did neither. He restates his facts, and brings forward his argument as clearly, as steadily, as calmly, as if he were referring to the matter for the first time; and certainly he paints no flattering picture. Opposed, as he was, to an immensely superior force, the term for which numbers of his men had been engaged would soon end, most of them concluding with the year. Congress held out no inducement to re-enlist. Washington points out the injustice and the ill effects of paying the militia, engaged only for a short time, so much more than the regular troops, and declares that while such was the system, it could not be expected that men would enlist. The pay of the officers was not enough to support them, and they could not be expected to leave their families to ruin.

He recommends that, as the war was not likely to be the work of a day, the army should be put upon a permanent footing, and such pay given to the officers as would induce respectable men to enter the service.

He says that a good bounty, and a hundred or a hundred and fifty acres of land, a suit of clothes and a blanket, should be given to each man, and adds, that at the time, the men could not procure decent clothes, much less send any help to their families.

The militia coming in only for six months, or for a less time, did not trouble themselves to obey discipline, and were allowed to take liberties the soldier was punished for.

"Trouble and jealousy were thus created, and those who wished order and discipline to prevail were rendered more unhappy than words could describe." Moreover, the constant change as the militia went and came threw everything into confusion. He was confident that if the present scheme were continued the cause would be ruined.

He might well say that the evils to be apprehended from a standing army were "remote, and, in his judgment, not at all to be dreaded," while the consequences of wanting a standing army were certain and inevitable ruin.

He says that the army surgeons should be as carefully chosen as other officers, and bluntly declares that many of the surgeons are "very great rascals." The director-general of the hospital had no authority over the regimental doctors, and there was a constant dispute between them.

The utmost punishment which could be inflicted in the army at that time was thirty-nine lashes, often given so as to be no punishment at all. The practice of plundering had begun to prevail to an alarming extent among the half-fed, half-clothed soldiers, and Washington says that under the then regulations he "might as well try to move Mount Atlas" as to check the offenders.

An officer had robbed a house beyond the lines of a

great number of valuables. Among other things, this gentleman, solely, as it would seem, to keep his hand in, had taken *four* large pier-glasses—of all things in the world to carry on a march!—and a quantity of women's clothing. Caught in the very act by a brigade major and ordered to return the goods, this officer drew up his party, and vowed to defend his pier-glasses at the hazard of his life. It was with the greatest difficulty that Washington succeeded in getting this man cashiered.

"It will be impossible," he says, "unless there is a thorough change in our military system, for me to conduct matters in such a manner as to give satisfaction to the public, which is all the recompense I aim at or ever wished for."

On the 25th of September, writing to Congress about the exchange of prisoners, he says, "This army is in want of almost every necessary—tents, camp kettles, blankets, and clothes of all kinds;" and then, returning to the subject of short enlistments, he points out that "as the term of enlistment will have almost expired by the time the clothes can be provided, here is a fresh proof of the disadvantages of levying an army upon such a footing as never to know how to keep them without injuring the public, or incommoding the men."

Before the letter of the 29th, however, Congress had been in part influenced by Washington's repeated entreaties to put the army on a better footing. After a debate which occupied two weeks, it was resolved to form the army into eight battalions, to be enlisted as

soon as possible, and to serve during the war. The articles of war were changed, and made more strict and efficient. A committee of three was appointed to confer with the General, and on receipt of his letter of the 29th, a resolution was passed that no surgeons should receive commissions but those who had passed examination before a professional board, to be appointed by each State.

In the meanwhile Lord Howe was using every means in his power to enlist the Tories or royalists, who it was supposed would flock with enthusiasm to the standard of the King. To Lord Howe's great surprise, very little enthusiasm was forthcoming. Mr. Oliver De Lancey, head of a wealthy family in New York, and devoted to the royal cause, was commissioned to raise 1500 men, and the people of Long Island were informed that if they did not volunteer for the King they would be drafted. Bounties were offered and rebel lands, but at the opening of the campaign in 1777, De Lancey had but 597 of the 1500 enlisted. The same ill success attended efforts in other States, and Howe tells us that little more than half the number required were raised, and of these *only a few were Americans.*

One of the most formidable of the Tory partisans was Robert Rogers of New Hampshire, an adventurer of very doubtful character who had been arrested while wandering about the country. He declared that he was on his way to offer his services to Congress, and had been sent under guard to Philadelphia. There he was liberated after giving his pledge in writing not to act against the Americans. He was no sooner at

liberty than he went over to Lord Howe, who gave him a colonel's commission to raise a regiment, to be called "The Queen's Rangers."

Loyalists of character were not likely to enlist under such a notorious person as Rogers, and his "Rangers" were made up of the very refuse of the country.* All through the war Rogers and his corps were objects of hatred.

Washington kept up a continual watch, traversing all the lines himself, and occasionally crossing to the Jersey shore, where Greene held command. Washington and his officers were at a loss to account for the slowness of Lord Howe, who could not be ignorant of the unfortunate state of the American army. Every hour they expected to see the British general prepare for action, and a watch was kept up over the fleet from all the heights, that news of its movements might be instantly carried.

There was great anxiety about the safety of the Hudson. Under the management of Putnam, the channel had been still more obstructed with sunken ships and timbers. Four galleys with heavy guns were near, as was also a sloop with a machine for submarine explosion, with which Putnam hoped to blow up the ships of war. These defences were so commanded by batteries on shore, that it was thought no ship could pass them.

Washington had meanwhile received the Commit-

* It was a strange idea of the fitness of things which dedicated such a set of land pirates as Rogers' corps to that most proper and decorous of queens, Queen Charlotte.

tee from Congress, and the news of the late resolutions. In reply, he wrote on the 4th of October an exceedingly strong letter.

"Your army," he says, "is on the eve of political dissolution. True, you have voted a larger one in lieu of it, but the season is late, and *there is a material difference between voting battalions and raising men.*" He points out that, according to the resolutions, the officers must negotiate about their commissions each with his own State, and mentions that some, without even the ceremony of asking leave, had gone home the moment they heard of the resolve.

"Such," he continues, "is the distrust and jealousy of military power, that the Commander-in-chief has not an opportunity, even by recommendation, to give the least reward for the most essential services."

"I ask pardon for taking up so much time with my opinions, but I should betray that trust which they and my country have reposed in me were I to be silent in a matter so interesting."

This last letter produced a great impression, and its recommendation that the several States should send committees to the army to appoint officers, was adopted, together with other regulations for the improvement of the service.

To add to the vexations which at this time harassed the Commander, was the presence of several French gentlemen who had received commissions. None of them could speak a word of English, and if they had been able, there were no vacancies for them. Washington says that they were in a "most irksome situa-

tion for something to do," and "seemed to be genteel, sensible men." One pities these "genteel, sensible men," with nothing to do, and unable to exchange a word with the people they were so anxious to serve. But more important matters soon claimed attention.

Washington, as well as Putnam, had placed great confidence in the obstructions in the Hudson. On the 9th of October, at eight o'clock in the morning, three ships and three tenders, led by the *Phœnix*, came easily up the Hudson, and making straight for the barriers, went through them with perfect ease. The batteries played upon them furiously, but they passed with only trifling damage to the ships and the loss of nine killed and eighteen wounded. A schooner laden with supplies, and the sloop with the explosive machine, ran before them. The former was captured, the latter sent to the bottom with a shot. Two new ships near by drove ashore at Phillips' Mills, and of the four galleys two ran under the guns of the fort; the other two ran aground just above Dobbs' Ferry. Their crews made their escape, and the galleys fell into possession of the enemy, and in their hands were likely to prove formidable.

Troops were sent immediately to prevent the landing of the British, but when they reached Dobbs' Ferry, they had already plundered and burned a store.

These ships were a source of great distress and anxiety to the Americans. The retreat of the army from New York had produced much discontent along the Hudson, and the patriots had been drained away

for the army to such an extent that it was feared the Tories would rise and overpower those who remained at home.

Howe's dispatches show very plainly that the great body of the Tories were not inclined to enlist. The principal danger was that the lowest characters in the country made their toryism a mere pretence for robbery and murder. There were many who were in conscience opposed to taking up arms against the King, who could not bring themselves to fight against their own countrymen. Many of this class sold their property at a sacrifice, and with sad hearts withdrew to Canada.* The Tory element was not so formidable as it seemed, but Washington seems to have thought that Howe's recruiting was very successful.

The Committee of Safety, hearing that the ships were in the Tappan Sea, sent to Washington asking him to despatch troops to Peekskill, "to secure the

* The phrase "Go to Halifax" originated at this time, as many royalists settled in that town.

First and last, the British Government distributed nearly fifteen millions of dollars in pensions and claims among the loyalists. Sabine's estimate, that twenty thousand took up arms for the king, seems extravagant, in the light of Howe's dispatches. West painted an allegorical picture of the reception of the Tories in England, in which, according to the taste of the time, Religion, Justice, the Genii of America and Britain, Indians, negroes, men, women and children, together with Mr. and Mrs. West, in a very conspicuous position near the royal crown, on a table, are all covering or being covered with the expanded mantle of Britannia, represented by a large lady sitting in the air, on nothing in particular. It was found after George the Third's death that he had kept an accurate list of the American loyalists, with all the particulars he could gather about each individual.

passes, prevent insurrection, and overawe the disaffected."

Washington sent off the Massachusetts militia, under Lincoln, as a fit force to deal with the Tories, who were thought to be on the eve of rising, and Colonel Tash, with a New Hampshire regiment, was sent to be at the order of the Committee of Safety, then sitting at Fishkill. Brigadier-General Clinton was ordered to have all passing boats searched and their owners examined, and Litchfield and Fairfield counties, in Connecticut, held their militia ready to put down insurrection in New York.

To all who knew the state of the country, affairs seemed almost desperate, and in a letter to Morris, Edward Rutledge seriously advocated the policy of desolating the whole country below the Highlands, and withdrawing the army to the hills.

On the 11th, the American cause very nearly sustained a greater misfortune than the arrival of the enemy's ships in the Hudson.

A small vessel seen from Fort Washington was taken for one of the British tenders, and was fired at from a twelve-pounder and struck. It was Washington's own yacht, and the captain and three men were killed.

CHAPTER XV.

BATTLE OF WHITE PLAINS.—BATTLE ON LAKE CHAMPLAIN.

WHILE the American forces were falling back before the British, and De Lancey and Rogers were straining every nerve to enlist the Tories, while Washington, beset on all sides, was holding his army together with the utmost difficulty, there was one man whose arrival soldiers and citizens were eagerly expecting. This was General Lee, who was the popular idol of the time. "General Lee," wrote an American officer from New York, "is hourly expected, as if from heaven with a legion of flaming swordsmen."

Lee's successes at the South, his dashing enterprises, were contrasted with Washington's retreat from Long Island and the evacuation of New York. The wisdom and generalship by which the Commander and his officers had saved the army from utter ruin, in the face of a greatly superior and victorious enemy, were not likely to be appreciated by the many who look only to immediate success, without weighing difficulties or comparing circumstances.

Washington himself had a high idea of Lee's military genius, and was anxious for his arrival. Lee reached Amboy on the 12th of October, and thence

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During the night, the bridge was torn up. p. 259.

wrote to Congress that he was confident Howe had no idea of attacking Washington. He was certain that Howe's object was Philadelphia, and he begged Congress "for Heaven's sake to arouse itself." He (Lee) was going to headquarters, and meant to urge Washington to "spare a part of his army, if he had any to spare," for the purpose of defending the city.

Unhappily for Lee's reputation as a prophet, on the very morning on which this letter was written, the British were landing at Throg's Point,* on the Sound, nine miles from the American camp. Throg's Point extended two miles into the Sound, was parted from the mainland by a little creek and a marsh, and every high tide converted it into an island. A ruined causeway, and a bridge over the creek, joined it with the continent, and at low water the upper end of the creek was fordable.

Four thousand men were pushed forward to secure this causeway, but General Heath had placed there Hand's riflemen, who kept them at bay, and when reinforced by Prescott's Massachusetts regiment, and a three-pounder, forced the British to seek the ford at the head of the creek. Here they were met by Colonel Graham's New Yorkers and a six-pounder. Again they were brought to a stand, and when Washington came on the ground, a scattering fire only was kept up across the morass. During the night, the bridge was torn up, and the British troops were thus left on an island.

* This place is called Throg's Neck, Throg's Point, Frog's Neck, and Frog's Point, and sometimes Throck's Neck, etc.

The British and Americans both threw up works on Throg's Point. For six whole days Howe remained inactive on this peninsula, waiting for supplies and reinforcements, though he had a large force already at his command, and must have known the condition of the American army.

On the 14th, General Lee arrived in camp. Washington was absent from headquarters, visiting the posts about King's Bridge. Lee rode out and joined him, and met with a cordial welcome. Washington gave him the command of the larger part of the army—the troops about King's Bridge.

Lee, at no time wanting in self-confidence, was elated by his successes in the South, and much disposed to find fault with others. In a letter to Gates, he censures Washington's disposition of the army. He finds fault with him for submitting to the dictation of Congress. "*Inter nos*," he writes, "the Congress seem to stumble at every step. I do not mean one or two of the cattle, but the whole stable. I have been very free in delivering my opinion to them. In my opinion, General Washington is much to blame in not menacing them with resignation, unless they refrain from unhinging the army by their absurd interference."

Washington, however, was not a man to add to the perplexities of the time by any such menace. His anxiety was for the cause and the country, not for himself. He knew that, to impress facts upon the minds of those who cannot see the state of a case with their own eyes, needs line upon line, and precept upon precept, and he bore up against vexations and hindrances

with a perseverance and patience which was truly heroic and Christian.

Congress, hearing of the arrival of the enemy's ships in the Hudson, passed resolutions, desiring Washington, if possible, to shut up the navigation of the Hudson at any expense, and so prevent the vessels already in the river from coming out or receiving help.

Washington called a council of war at Lee's headquarters, to consider the question of awaiting the attack where they then were, or of abandoning entirely Manhattan Island. All the major-generals were present but Greene, all the brigadiers, and Knox, who commanded the artillery.

It was urged that their position was well-fortified, and difficult of access; but Lee laughed at the idea of holding the island. The only pass to the mainland was at King's Bridge. The enemy had ships on both sides, and could hem them in, front and rear. "For my part," he said, "I would have nothing to do with the islands to which you have been clinging so pertinaciously. I would give Mr. Howe the fee simple of them." With only one dissenting voice—General Clinton's—all agreed that it was not possible to prevent the communication from being cut off, in which case the Americans must fight at disadvantage or surrender at discretion. Owing to the resolve of Congress, it was decided, against Washington's own judgment, to retain Fort Washington as long as possible. It was strongly garrisoned with some of the best troops in the service, under Colonel Magaw, who was charged to "defend it to the last extremity."

The name of the post opposite, on the Jersey shore, was changed from Fort Constitution to Fort Lee, and it was hoped that the batteries of these two posts would prevent the passage of the ships, although they had already proved quite ineffectual.

The army was divided into four bodies, assigned to the command of Lee, Heath, Sullivan and Lincoln. Lee was placed opposite to King's Bridge on Valentine's Hill, to protect the transportation of baggage and military stores from the island, and the other divisions in fortified posts extending along the hills of the Bronx from Lee's camp to White Plains. Washington, as usual, was the last in the retreat, and during this time he was continually in the saddle surveying the country, and choosing sites for his works. He disposed his army with great skill, so that it was protected entirely by the Bronx, a narrow but deep stream, bordered by trees. His troops faced and also flanked the enemy, while at the same time they protected the roads through which the stores and baggage were to be transported. On the 23d the Commander-in-chief took up his quarters at White Plains with his troops.

General Howe on the 18th had crossed from Throg's Point on boats, and being joined by the main body, marched from Pell's Point to New Rochelle, meaning to get above Washington's army. On their advance the British were greatly harassed by Glover's "amphibious regiment," who were as much at home with rifles as with oar and sail. With them were Reed's and Shepard's infantry. The Americans drove the British advance guard back twice, and then re-

treated on the main body with small loss. The officers and troops were publicly thanked by Washington.

General Howe encamped at New Rochelle, his lines extending to Mamaroneck, on the Sound. Here was posted Rogers, the renegade, with his "Queen's Rangers."

Lord Stirling sent out Colonel Haslet with 750 Delaware men, to surprise, if possible, the Tory camp. Haslet crossed the British lines and came down upon the Queen's Rangers undiscovered. Several of the Tories were killed, and others taken prisoners, but Rogers himself slipped away at the first fire. Sixty stand of arms, the colors of the Rangers, and other spoils, were taken, and Haslet returned in safety and with no loss.

This skirmish, and some others in which the Americans were successful, inspirited the troops, and gave them steadiness and confidence.

While thus facing the Americans, Howe was joined by Knyphausen's division of Hessians, a regiment of Waldeckers, and by the Seventeenth Light Dragoons, and a portion of the Sixteenth, just from Ireland. They brought some of their horses from over sea, and procured others in the country. The formidable appearance of these troopers at first made them objects of great dread to the Americans, more especially to the militia.

Washington took great pains to convince his men that the dragoons were more terrible in appearance than in reality. In a rough country like that they then occupied, full of trees, rocks and water-courses,

and marked off by stone walls, the horsemen were really at great disadvantage opposed to the American riflemen, who could pick them off in detail. He also proclaimed that a reward of one hundred dollars would be paid for every dragoon brought in with his horse and equipments. On the 27th an attack was made on Fort Washington by two ships, at the same time that Lord Percy fell upon the lines. Both the soldiers and the ships were beaten back, the latter sustaining great damage.

While these movements were going on, Lee, with his men and a train of wagons four miles long, was traveling all night over the rough road to the camp, which, happily, he reached in safety.

Opposite to the height on which the camp was pitched was a rocky eminence, called Chatterton's Hill, which partially commanded the right flank. Here a militia regiment was stationed.

On the morning of the 28th, Washington, with Lee and other officers, rode out to survey a hill which seemed to offer a better position, when a trooper came galloping up to tell him that the British were in the camp.

"Then, gentlemen," said the Commander-in-chief, "we have other business to attend to than reconnoitering." Putting his horse to full speed, and followed by his staff, he reached the camp to learn that the pickets had been driven in, that the enemy were advancing, and that the Americans were posted in order of battle.

"Gentlemen, said Washington to his generals,

"you will return to your respective posts, and do the best you can."

The militia on Chatterton's Hill were reinforced by some more experienced troops, but the whole force posted there did not exceed sixteen hundred men. This had scarcely been done, when the British and Hessians, under Clinton and De Heister, appeared, accompanied by a troop of the dreaded dragoons. As they came glittering in all the "pomp of ordered war" out upon the high ground above White Plains, they presented a formidable spectacle. Howe halted for a while, and his men began throwing up intrenchments on the left. Their right wing reached to the American lines, and these two wings and the centre were almost a semicircle. Their intention was evidently to get in the rear of the American camp.

The day passed without any attack, and Washington seized the interval to remove the sick and wounded, and all the stores that could be spared, from his camp.

The two forces lay within cannon-shot of each other. The night was dark and chilly, and both armies kindled fires all over the hills. "These fires," says Gen. Heath, "some on the level ground, some at the foot of the hills, and at all distances to their brows, some of which were lofty, seemed to the eye to mix with the stars."

Washington spent the night in drawing back his right wing to stronger ground, and strengthening his works by additions. These additions, very formidable in appearance, were made of corn-stalks, pulled up

from a neighboring field, with as much earth as possible about their roots. The roots were placed outward, the tops inward, and the whole was filled up with loose earth or whatever came to hand. These barriers were erected with great rapidity, and in the morning Howe, discouraged by their apparent strength, instead of making a direct assault, prepared to throw up lines as if for a cannonade, his forces meanwhile endeavoring to get around the Americans in flank and rear.

In order to prevent his communication with the upper country from being cut off, Washington sent a detachment to hold Pine's Bridge, over the Croton, being most anxious to convey his exhausted men where they would have time to recruit their strength.

Never, probably, was a regular, well-found, and superior army held at bay by such an assembly as were the Americans at that time.

"I believe no nation ever saw such a set of tatterdemalions," writes a British officer. "There are few coats among them but what are out at elbows, and in a whole regiment there is scarce a pair of breeches. Judge, then, how they must be pinched by a winter's campaign. We, who are warmly clothed and well equipped, already feel it severely."

Well might one of Washington's aids say, "If we with our motley army can keep Mr. Howe and his grand appointment at bay, I think we shall make no contemptible military figure."

General George Clinton, who looked with very disapproving eyes on the retreating policy, and had been

anxious to meet the British in the open field, feared that fatigue and cold would destroy the army without fighting. "However," adds the General, "I would not be understood to condemn measures. They may be right for aught I know." In another letter he says: "Pray let Mrs. Clinton know that I am well, and that she need not be uneasy about me. It would be too much honor to die in so good a cause." The sentiment does the General credit, but it may be doubted whether it relieved Mrs. Clinton's anxiety.

On the night of the 31st, Washington made another move. He set fire to some stores and forage that could not be carried away; he left a strong guard on the heights and in the woods, and withdrew his main army five miles to the rocks and hills of Northcastle. There he again set to work at intrenchments, fighting, as he said, "with the spade and pickaxe."

Howe made no attack upon the new camp, and a violent rain coming on, the British forces lay inactive till the 4th of November, when they broke up, and moved off along the road leading to Dobbs' Ferry.

On the night of November 5th, the court-house and some other buildings belonging to the village of White Plains were burned. It was the act of some drunken persons, but has been charged upon Washington by the English. It was severely censured by him in the general order for next day, in which he calls the perpetrators "base and cowardly wretches," and assures the army that they shall "meet with the punishment they deserve."

It was very doubtful whether it was Howe's intention to invade New Jersey on his way to Philadelphia, or to lay siege to Fort Washington.

Washington wrote to the Governor of New Jersey, urging him to have the militia in readiness. He also recommended that the people near the coast should remove all their stock, grain, forage and other property to the interior as soon as possible, otherwise, he said, they would suffer terribly, as the distinction between Whig and Tory was lost "in one general scene of ravage and desolation."

Howe did not long leave the Americans in doubt as to his intentions. On the day of the battle at White Plains, Knyphausen, with his Hessians, had taken up a position between Fort Washington and King's Bridge. Once more the obstructions in the river proved useless, and a frigate, with two transports, sailed past the forts quite unhurt. Washington's own opinion was that it was not advisible to hold the fort, since, as it had proved useless to close the river against the English vessels, there was no advantage in hazarding men and arms in its defence.

General Greene, however, and Colonel Magaw, the commander, were for retaining the post at all risks, and believed that, even should it prove untenable, the men and stores could be removed in time. Congress had laid great stress on retaining Fort Washington, and though they had nominally left the decision to Washington, he knew that to abandon it would create great displeasure in Philadelphia, and hinder him from receiving power to carry out those reforms in the

army upon which, more than on anything else, depended the safety of the cause. He suffered his judgment to be overruled, and the garrison was left in the fort.

A new disposition of the army was made. The troops from west of the Hudson were to be sent into New Jersey, and the division under Lord Stirling was already on its way. Connecticut, Massachusetts and New York militia were to be left with Clinton, to secure the posts in the Highlands. Heath. with his division, was to coöperate with Clinton.

The troops to remain at Northcastle were left under the command of Lee. Washington's letter of instructions to Lee is written with his usual modesty. It shows that he had great confidence in Lee—a confidence on this occasion not a little misplaced.

Much was left to his discretion. The post at Croton Bridge was especially recommended to his care. "If the enemy," writes Washington, "should remove the whole or the greater part of their forces to the west side of the Hudson River, I have no doubt of your following with all possible dispatch."

On the 10th of November, Washington left Northcastle at eleven o'clock in the morning, and by sunset reached Peekskill. Heath's division was there, and also Lord Stirling, who had, however, sent his men across the river.

The great defile of the Hudson was an object of much anxiety to Washington and his generals, and the next day was spent in visiting and choosing sites for the various works which were to be erected. West

Point, the site selected by Lord Stirling, was chosen for a fortress, which was thought to be the key to the Highlands. On the same day he wrote to Lee, enclosing the resolutions of Congress concerning the additions to the army, and urging the necessity of beginning immediately to recruit, and he again pressed the removal of the stores above Croton Bridge.

Heath was left in command of the Highlands at Peekskill. He was a man devoted to the cause, and a brave and faithful officer.

While he was at Peekskill, Washington had the pleasure of receiving good news from that division of the northern army which, under the command of Gates, was acting on Lake Champlain. Sir Guy Carleton had been making every effort to get possession of Lake Champlain and Lake George. Should he succeed, all northern New York would be in his power, and before winter came, he might take Albany, coöperate with Howe, cut off the American forces north and south from each other, and bring the war to a close.

With all he could do, however, it was three months before his flotilla was ready, though the soldiers divided the labor with the sailors, and the Canadian farmers were pressed into the service, and employed in dragging the boats overland or up the Sorel Rapids. When October came, twenty or thirty vessels, well armed and manned, were ready for action. The flagship mounted eighteen twelve-pounders, and the other vessels were armed in proportion. One floating battery, called the *Thunderer*, carried six twenty-four

and twelve six-pounders, besides howitzers. Seven hundred seamen manned this fleet, which in all points was admirably equipped.

Sir Guy's plan required that he should cut his way through Lake Champlain, take Crown Point and Ticonderoga, pass Lake George, and make a rough and dangerous march through woods and swamps to Albany, in which city he expected to find winter quarters.

The American naval force on the Lake was under the command of Arnold. Every sort of difficulty had beset its construction, and when finished, it was a pitiful array to oppose to Sir Guy's numerous and well-appointed flotilla.

The two forces met near Valcour's Island, and a hot action ensued. The British commander, who was accompanied by a horde of Indians, landed his savages on the island, to maintain a rifle-fire on the Americans. This measure did not prove as destructive as he had hoped; but the wild shrieks and yells of the savages, added to the uproar of the battle and the heavy cannon, were horrible in the extreme. Instead of dismaying the Americans, the fire from the island and the yells of the savages seemed only to add to their rage, and finding themselves hemmed in, they fought with fierce desperation. Arnold drove his galley, the *Congress*, into the hottest of the fight. He cheered on his men, he pointed his guns with his own hand. It seemed as though he bore a charmed life, for though in the midst of a hot cannonade and musket-fire, he was not even touched.

In spite of the tremendous odds against the Americans, the battle was yet undecided when night came down. The British squadron was drawn off, and anchored near Arnold's little fleet, Sir Guy thinking that in the morning he should be able to capture the whole.

Arnold, however, took advantage of a north wind and a dark night. Every one of his vessels slipped through the enemy's line unseen and unheard, and by daylight, to the amazement of the British, they were nowhere to be seen. The pursuit was at once begun, and not far from Schuyler's Island they saw Arnold's galley, that of General Waterbury, and four gondolas. All these vessels, having been much injured the day before, had dropped behind the others, which were nearly out of sight.

There was an anxious race. The wind was adverse. General Waterbury, on the *Washington*, was overtaken by three vessels and exposed to a tremendous fire, and, already much crippled, was obliged to surrender.

The *Congress* and the little gondolas, however, fought until they were mere wrecks. Arnold was resolved that neither men nor ships should fall into British hands. The gondolas were run ashore and set on fire. Their crews waded to land, and kept off the enemy with rifles till the boats were consumed. Arnold followed the same course with the *Congress*, and stayed on board till the flames had half destroyed her. His flag was kept flying to the last. He and his men carrying the wounded, made their way by a rough road to Crown Point, where they destroyed everything

Carrying the wounded to Crown Point. p. 272.

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they could not carry, and taking the vessels that had escaped, sailed for Ticonderoga.

This affair added much to Arnold's already high reputation.

Sir Guy Carleton occupied Crown Point, and made several attempts to attack Ticonderoga. Gates, however, presented such an obstinate front, that Sir Guy became discouraged. Winter was upon him, and even if Ticonderoga were taken, it could only be with losses that would seriously embarrass further operations. The way to Albany was long, cold and rough, and by the 1st of November he abandoned Crown Point, and with all his vessels and his horde of savages returned to his comfortable quarters in Canada.

Such was the news which Washington heard at Peekskill, and which he must have heard with great satisfaction, as it relieved him of all anxiety for the winter, so far as concerned the northern provinces and the northern army.

CHAPTER XVI.

LOSS OF FORT WASHINGTON.—RETREAT TO NEW JERSEY.

ON the morning of the 12th of November, Washington crossed the Hudson near Stony Point. Below him, in the broad waters of the Tappan Sea and Haverstraw Bay, the *Phœnix*, *Rose* and *Tartar* lay at anchor, to guard the lower ferries. The army under Lord Stirling, thus shut out from the nearer passes, was taking a roundabout road over the hills. The troops which had just crossed were ordered to proceed by the same path to Hackensack, while Washington and Reed took a direct road to Fort Lee, as they were both in great anxiety about Fort Washington.

They reached there the next day, but, to his disappointment, Washington found that General Greene, instead of ordering Magaw and his men to retreat, had reinforced the garrison, so that it now amounted to over two thousand men.

The fort had been invested on all sides but one, but still Magaw was sure that it could be defended. On the night of the 14th a number of flat-bottomed boats made their way into Harlem river, providing means for landing troops before the weakest part of the American lines, and on the 15th, Howe sent in a summons to surrender, threatening to put all to the sword

if the place were carried by assault. Magaw replied that he could hardly think Lord Howe would execute such a threat, but that at all events he should defend the post "to the very last extremity."

General Greene sent over more men, and despatched an express to Washington, who had in the meantime gone back to Hackensack, five miles distant, where the weary troops from Peekskill were encamped.

Washington reached Fort Lee at nightfall. Greene and Putnam had gone over to the besieged fort. Washington hurried into a boat, and was half across the river when he met the two generals returning. They assured him that the garrison were in a state to make a good defence. Not wishing that the Commander-in-chief should venture within the walls of the beset fort, Greene and Putnum with great difficulty persuaded Washington to return to Fort Lee. He was extremely excited and anxious.

Magaw's forces were now nearly three thousand men, and included some of the finest troops in the service. Most of them were stationed at the outworks, for the fort would not hold them. Lord Howe had planned four attacks, to take place at once, and at noon the cannonade began.

The men at the outworks fought fiercely, and their rifles told severely upon the enemy. From repeated firing, however, their pieces became foul, and Colonel Cadwalader, who was posted on the outer lines, being attacked on two sides, was obliged to retreat to the fort. He was hotly pursued by Lord Percy and the Hessians, who, as usual, showed no quarter. The

Americans turned again and again on their pursuers, and marked their path by the number of slain.

On the other side the same resistance, and equally in vain, was offered by Rawlings, who kept Knyphausen at bay until he was reinforced by Rahl.

Rawlings retreated to the fort, and Knyphausen, posting his men behind a large stone house, summoned the fort to surrender.

Washington, at Fort Lee, watched the action through his glass. When he saw Cadwalader's troops driven in, and his men bayoneted by the Hessians, while asking in vain for quarter, those who were with him say that "he wept with the tenderness of a child." Doubtless it was bitter to him to think that he had suffered himself to be overruled; and he took upon himself the responsibility of the disaster.

He wrote a note to Magaw saying that if he could hold out till evening, an endeavor would be made to bring off the garrison in the night.

Captain Gooch, of Boston, carried this note over the river in the face of the enemy. "He ran up to the fort, delivered the message, came out, ran and jumped over the broken ground, dodging the Hessians, some of whom struck at him with their pieces, while others attempted to thrust him with their bayonets. Escaping through them, he got to his boat, and returned to Fort Lee."

The captain's bravery, however, was useless to save the garrison. Magaw was beset on all sides. Everywhere the British could pour in shot and shell, and his men were so crowded together that they could not act.

He surrendered himself and his garrison prisoners of war. The men were allowed to retain their baggage and the officers their side-arms.

As soon as the British flag was seen to go up over the lost fort, Washington turned his mind to the defence of the upper country. He wrote instantly to Lee, informing him of the surrender, urging upon him the defence of the upper passes, but leaving it to his discretion whether or not to retreat.

Lee thought his position at Northcastle was sufficiently safe, and averred that he could retreat at any moment. In regard to the loss of the fort, he only observed, "Oh, General! why would you be over-persuaded by men of inferior judgment to your own? It was a cursed affair!"

Over-modesty and a too great regard for the opinions of others were not faults for which Lee was likely to make much allowance.

Washington's letters to his brother at this time are full of trouble and discouragement. "If I had spoken with a prophetic spirit," he says, "I could not have foretold the evils with more accuracy than I did. All the year I have been pressing Congress to lose no time in engaging men upon such terms as would ensure success, telling them that the longer it was delayed, the more difficult it would prove. But the measure was not commenced till it was too late to be effected, and then in such a manner as to bid adieu to every hope of getting an army from which any services are to be expected—the different States, without any regard to the qualifications of an officer, quarreling

about the appointments, and nominating such as are *not fit to be shoe-blacks*,* from the local attachments of this or that member of Assembly. I am wearied almost to death with the retrograde motion of things, and I solemnly protest that a pecuniary reward of twenty thousand pounds a year would not induce me to undergo what I do, and after all, perhaps to lose my character, as it is impossible, under such a variety of distressing circumstances, to conduct matters agreeably to public expectation."

The capture of Fort Washington made Fort Lee useless, and orders were at once given to remove troops, baggage and stores. It was, however, too late.

On the 15th of November, a British force of six thousand, under Lord Cornwallis, crossed the river and landed at Closter Dock, five miles above the fort. An express was instantly sent to Washington, then at Hackensack with the main army. The enemy were extending their lines to hem in the garrison between the Hudson and the Hackensack, and cut them off from the rest of the troops. Nothing but an instant retreat could secure the bridge over the Hackensack. There were no horses and wagons on hand, and a great amount of tents and stores were left behind, and all the artillery but two twelve-pounders. Such was the haste, that even the camp-kettles were left over the fires. Rapid as was the retreat of the Americans, when they reached the Hackensack River, the enemy

* Probably the gentleman who stole the pier-glasses was one of this class.

was close upon them. They crossed where they could, and Cornwallis made no effort to prevent them.

Washington at once sent orders to Lee to remove his troops to the west side of the Hudson, and wait further commands. The next day he himself wrote to Lee in a more urgent strain; he also wrote to Governor Livingston, of New Jersey, to raise the militia and oppose the progress of the enemy. Lee's course at this time of distress added much to Washington's perplexities. He coolly took his own way, regardless of the repeated orders of the Commander-in-chief. He had plans of his own which he was resolved to carry out, and while he was acting in defiance of all military discipline, lamented openly "the indecision" of Washington. Even Reed, Washington's most trusted and beloved friend, wrote to Lee in terms of what was certainly most extravagant eulogy, and spoke of Washington in a way which does no honor to his (Reed's) character either as a soldier or a gentleman.

"I do not mean to flatter or praise you at the expense of any other," he says, "but I do think that it is entirely owing to you that this army, and the liberties of America, so far as they are dependent on it, are not entirely cut off. You have decision,—a quality often wanting in minds otherwise valuable,—and I ascribe to this our escape from York Island, King's Bridge, and the Plains; and I have no doubt had you been here, the garrison of Fort Washington would now have composed a part of our army; and from all these circumstances, I confess I do ardently wish to see you removed from a place where there will be so

little call for your judgment and experience, to the place where they are likely to be so necessary. Nor am I singular in my opinion. The gentlemen of the family, the officers and soldiers generally, have a confidence in you. The enemy constantly inquire where you are, and seem to have less confidence when you are present."

Then he continues concerning the loss of Fort Washington:

"General Washington's own judgment, seconded by representations from us, would, I believe, have saved the men and their arms; but, unluckily, General Greene's judgment was contrary. This kept the General's mind in a state of suspense till the blow was struck. Oh, General! an undecisive mind is one of the greatest misfortunes that can befall an army! How often have I lamented it in this campaign! All circumstances considered, we are in a very awful and alarming situation, one that requires the utmost wisdom and firmness of mind. As soon as the season will admit, I *think yourself and some others should go to Congress and form the plan of a new army.* I must conclude with my clear and explicit opinion that your presence is of the last importance."

To fully appreciate this letter, we must remember that this presentment of Washington as a well intentioned but irresolute person, whose "undecisive mind" needs the support of some bolder nature, is made by a staff-offier writing of his commander, and by one whom that commander loved and trusted with his whole heart. The suggestion that Lee and others were

to tender their advice to Congress concerning the new army without reference to Washington's plans is a singular one, and had Washington known it, it could not have failed justly and deeply to hurt and offend him.

This letter was written on the 21st of November.

The army at Hackensack was only about three thousand men, and would soon be reduced by the expiration of terms of enlistment. They had lost tents, stores and baggage, and were almost without clothes, shoes or blankets to cover them. They were in a flat country, and their intrenching tools were gone. The enemy with their ships could land troops where they pleased.

Reed was sent to Governor Livingston to hasten the New Jersey militia; Mifflin to Philadelphia to urge Congress to take immediate measures to raise men. Still, however, Washington looked for Lee's arrival in vain, but on the 24th came a letter from that general to Reed. Washington opened it, as he did all official letters. Lee had not yet moved from Northcastle. Dobbs' Ferry was blocked, and the way round by King's Ferry was so long that he could not reach it in time to be of any use. He had ordered Heath to detach two thousand men, send word to Washington, and await further orders. He flattered himself that by this mode he should better obey what he was pleased to call "the spirit" of Washington's orders, than if he should move from Northcastle. Withdrawing the troops would be attended with very serious consequences. On November 23d, he wrote to Bowdoin, President of the Massachusetts Council. He is evi-

dently strongly inclined to act independently of his commander. He calls Washington's plans "absolute insanity." He looks to Massachusetts for assistance for his division, and on the following day he wrote to the same person, lamenting deeply the "indecision" exhibited in Congress, and in all our military councils. "Indecision" was on the eve of overthrowing the liberty of America and the rights of mankind. The resolves of Congress were not to be too nicely weighed. There were times when men were called on "to commit treason against the laws of the state for the salvation of the state," and in his opinion the present crisis demanded "this brave, virtuous kind of treason." He begs the President to waive all formalities, and raise and send on forces immediately, and in the tone of a dictator, orders the militia to be sent to him. "Let your people," he concludes, "be well supplied with blankets and warm clothes, as I am determined, by the help of God, to unseat 'em (the enemy), even in the dead of winter."

Lee evidently thought that he was the coming man, and that his own decided mind was to conquer where his irresolute commander had failed.

On the 24th he again wrote to Washington from Northcastle, saying that he should endeavor to obey his orders, but that he doubted whether he would be able to bring with him any considerable numbers, as his men were in such a wretched condition for want of clothes, shoes, stockings and blankets, and the weather being so cold, made their sufferings intolerable. He had ordered Heath to send over two thousand men,

but "that great man," as Lee scornfully calls him, "had intrenched himself within the letter of his instructions, and refused to part with a single file." The conclusion of this letter shows that he had plans of his own to carry out, and had no intention of going to the support of the main army. "I should march this day with Glover's brigade, but have just received intelligence that Rogers' corps, a part of the light horse, and another brigade, lie in so exposed a situation as to present us the fairest opportunity of carrying them off. If we succeed, it will have a great effect, and amply compensate us for two days' delay."

No sooner had Lee sent this letter than he received one from Washington, telling him that it was not Heath's division that was wanted, but his own. Heath's men must remain, as they had been ordered to guard the Highlands. It would not do to risk the gates of the Hudson. Washington thought that Lee was at Peekskill. He begged him to take every care to come by a safe road—to keep between the mountains and the British, who it was supposed were taking measures to cut off his march.

Lee replied in much the same strain he had used before. He was delayed by the want of wagons. Washington was mistaken about the force of the British in the Jerseys. There were not nearly so many as he was told; besides, he had stayed behind to sweep the country of Tories. He had sent some men on, and would come himself the next day.

On the same day he wrote to Heath in a strain of great irritation; indeed, to judge from his letters, he

seems never to have had the least command of his temper.

"I perceive that you have formed an idea that should General Washington remove to the Straits of Magellan, the instructions he left with you upon a particular occasion have to all intents and purposes invested you with a command separate from and independent of all other superiors—that General Heath is by no means to consider himself obliged to obey the second in command."

In conclusion, he informs Heath that in Washington's absence he commands on the east side of the Hudson, and that "for the future he *would* and *must* be obeyed."

Heath, who had in his way quite as high an opinion of himself as Lee, and, as he tells us, was "fully acquainted *with the theory* of war in all its branches," does not seem to have been greatly impressed with this imperious letter. He sent to Washington for express instructions whether to obey Lee or not, and kept his men ready for a move.

General Clinton was in an agony of anxiety lest the Hudson should be left open to the enemy. "Should we be ordered to move," he wrote, "all's over with the river this season, and I fear forever." Clinton's anxiety was needless, for Washington, who was then at Newark, sent back his original order that the troops under Heath should remain to guard the passes.

Washington was at Newark on the 27th, still looking vainly for Lee, when he received Lee's letter, written on the 24th, in which he had mentioned his plan for surprising the "Queen's Rangers."

In a more prosperous state of affairs, it would have been an important advantage to gain; but more vital interests were in the balance, and again Washington wrote to Lee, giving him explicit orders to advance as soon as possible. He showed how weak was the army, how close upon him were the British, who had already crossed the Passaic, and who he thought were bent on taking Philadelphia.

The situation of Washington's army was every hour growing more and more perilous. The enemy were close upon them, and the men, few in numbers, half clothed, half fed, and half frozen, were in no state to offer much opposition to Howe and Cornwallis, and their well-provided mercenaries.

Considering the circumstances, we cannot but wonder at the patience of that Commander-in-chief who, with everything trembling in the balance, could condescend to argue with a subordinate who so insolently set his orders at defiance. Had Washington been that Cromwell to whom he was so often compared, Lee would have had little time, and less cause, to lament his Commander's "indecision."

Beset as he was, Washington hoped to make a stand at Brunswick, on the Raritan River, or if not there, on the Delaware. To this some members of his council were opposed; but Greene warmly favored the idea.

He broke up camp at Newark, and retreated toward Brunswick. So close was the enemy upon him, that the American rear-guard left the town at one end as the advance of Cornwallis entered the other.

Washington wrote from Brunswick, on the 29th, to Governor Livingston, of New Jersey, begging him to have all boats and river craft of all sorts, for seventy miles along the Delaware, removed to the western bank and put under guard, to be out of reach of the enemy.

At the Raritan, Washington's hopes of making a stand were disappointed. Including the New Jersey militia, his force did not exceed four thousand men. Reed could get no help from the New Jersey Legislature, which, driven from place to place, was about to dissolve. A great proportion of the people in the country had accepted Howe's "protections;" and while those who had taken up arms in their country's defence were being driven from one camp to another, through the State the people remained neutral, only to find that the "protections" were a mockery, and to fall a prey to the Hessians.

The terms of the Maryland and New Jersey troops, under Mercer, were ended, and, in spite of the entreaties of their commander, they persisted in going home, the New Jersey men being anxious, as well they might be, for their families. The Pennsylvania men, however, who had no such excuse, went away in such numbers that guards were placed at the ferries and roads to intercept them.

At this time of distress and difficulty there came to Washington by express a letter from Lee to Reed. It was in reply to Reed's epistle of the 21st. Washington supposed that it was on official business, and opened it, as was his custom.

One look at the page was sufficient to show Washington that his most trusted friend in the hour of need had been indulging in disparaging criticism, not only on his conduct as a leader, but on his personal character, and that, too, to a subordinate, who, as it clearly appeared, was setting himself up as a rival.* Lee's letter ran as follows:

"My Dear Reed:—I received your most obliging, flattering letter. I lament with you that fatal indecision of mind which, in war, is a much greater disqualification than stupidity or even want of personal courage. Accident may put a decisive blunderer in the right, but eternal defeat and miscarriage must attend the man of the best parts if cursed with *indecision*. The General recommends me, in so pressing a manner as almost to amount to an order, to bring over the Continental troops under my command, which recommendation or order throws me into the greatest dilemma, from several considerations." He then goes on to state these considerations, and continues: "My reason for not having marched already is that we have just received intelligence that Rogers' corps, the light horse, part of the Highlanders, and another brigade, lie in so exposed a situation as to give the fairest opportunity of being carried. I should have attempted it last night, but the rain was too violent, and when our pieces are wet, you know our troops are *hors du*

* It may be urged as some excuse for Reed that he had strongly advised the removal of the garrison at Fort Washington, and that the troops who were sacrificed there were many of them friends and acquaintances of his own. It is not much of an excuse, but it is all there is.

combat. I only wait myself for this business of Rogers and company being over. I shall then fly to you, for, to confess a truth, I really think our chief will do better with me than without me."

Whatever may have been the bitterness of Washington's feelings, he made no display of them, nor, so far as is known, did he ever speak of the matter to any one.

To Reed he uttered no word of reproach, and in his subsequent letters to Lee he never refers to the affair at all. He sent on the letter to Reed, with a brief note, which I give in full, as it is perhaps one of the most remarkable proofs of Washington's forbearance, and of that strength which held under control a naturally fiery temper.

"DEAR SIR:—The enclosed was put into my hands by an express from White Plains. Having no idea of its being a private letter, much less suspecting the tenor of the correspondence, I opened it, as I have done all other letters to you from the same place and Peekskill, upon the duties of your office, as I conceived and found them to be. This, as the truth, must be my excuse for seeing the contents of a letter which neither inclination nor intention would have prompted me to.

"I thank you for the trouble and fatigue you have undergone in your journey to Burlington, and sincerely wish that your labors may be crowned with the desired success. With best respects to Mrs. Reed, I am, dear sir, GEORGE WASHINGTON.

From that time the close and affectionate friendship

which had existed between Washington and Reed was interrupted. Reed for some weeks was absent from headquarters, and though Washington consulted him on military matters, and showed a sense of his merits as a soldier, his personal confidence in him had received an incurable wound. His letters were less frequent, and were confined to official business.

Reed seems to have felt the value of what he had lost, and in letters of a later date he attempts to explain what had taken place. When he says, however, that in the letter he had written to Lee, Washington "would see nothing inconsistent with the respect and affection he always had felt, and always should feel, for his character," it must be confessed that he had either strangely forgotten its tenor, or else that he had very singular ideas of the nature of respect and affection.

Fortunately for Reed, Washington never saw the letter to Lee. The remarks on his character, the plan for consulting with Congress concerning the new army, without reference to that army's commander, were not to be explained away. Washington, however, never read the letter, and therefore he did not, as Reed entreated him to do, judge him by "realities, and not by appearances." Had he done so, he never could have written, as he afterwards did, that he was "perfectly satisfied that matters were not as they had appeared from the letter alluded to."*

It is to be hoped that a letter which Washington

* This whole correspondence is to be found in the eighth appendix to the fourth volume of Sparks, and is well worth reading.

received that day from that true and faithful patriot Livingston, Governor of New Jersey, was some consolation to his harassed and wounded mind.

"I can easily," said the Governor, "form some ideas of the difficulties under which you labor, particularly of one for which the public will make no allowance, because your prudence and fidelity to the cause will not suffer you to reveal it to the public—an instance of magnanimity perhaps superior to any that can be shown in battle. But depend upon it, my dear sir, the impartial world will do you ample justice before long. May God support you under that fatigue, both of body and mind, to which you must be constantly exposed."*

Washington remained at Brunswick till the 1st of December, vainly hoping to be reinforced by Lee, and by the militia of New Jersey; but in both hopes he was disappointed, and in his letters he speaks with some bitterness of the backwardness of the people, and their disaffection.

There were many excuses, however, to be made for New Jersey. On his entrance into the State, Lord Howe had sent out a proclamation promising safety to those who should take the oath to the King. The American cause seemed almost hopelessly lost, and it appeared to the country people that they had everything to lose and nothing to gain by taking up arms

* Washington was no more safe from slander than any other faithful servant of the country before or since. There are those yet living who can remember when the vilest stories were circulated concerning his personal character.

for their country. They availed themselves largely of the proclamation; but they soon had reason to wish that they had taken a bolder part. The troops plundered and outraged friend and foe alike. The Hessians especially committed great outrages, and terrible stories of their brutalities are yet told in the State. The same strange stupidity which had from the first marked the British councils in regard to the colonies prevailed among the British generals, who suffered their troops to murder, outrage, plunder and burn, as if on purpose to convince even the Tories that there was no hope of humanity or justice except it were obtained by force of arms.

Washington did not fall back from Brunswick till the British appeared on the other side of the Raritan, when he broke down the bridge, and at night resumed his weary march, while Alexander Hamilton with his few field pieces opened a brisk cannonade, and this little battery, under command of a youth of nineteen, actually checked the advance of the British army.*

Still retreating toward the Delaware, Washington left twelve hundred men at Princeton, to watch the enemy, under command of Stirling and Stephen. On the 2d of December, the army reached Trenton, and the baggage and stores were sent across the Delaware.

"Nothing but necessity," says Washington, in a letter to Congress, "obliges me to retire before the enemy, and leave so much of the Jerseys unprotected.

*I have heard those say who had conversed with men who shared in the retreat across New Jersey, that the old soldiers could not speak of those days without tears.

If the militia of this State had stepped forward in season (and timely notice they had), we might have prevented the enemy's crossing the Hackensack, or made a stand at Brunswick, on the Raritan."

Lord Howe now issued a proclamation dated the 30th of November, ordering all persons in arms against his Majesty's government to disband and return home, and he offered a free pardon to those who obeyed in fifty days. Notwithstanding the display of the nature of royal mercy and protection which the Hessians were making in New Jersey, many took advantage of this proclamation who had been forward in the cause, and the enemy seem to have thought that the struggle was nearly over. The British correspondent, whom the failure of a whole century's predictions has never discouraged, was in a state of delight at our inevitable ruin.

"The rebels continue flying before our army. *Mr.* Washington had orders from Congress to rally and defend that post (Brunswick), but he sent word to Congress he could not. Such a panic has seized the rebels that no part of the Jerseys will hold them, and I doubt whether Philadelphia will stop their career. The Congress have lost their authority. . . . They are in such consternation they know not what to do. The two Adamses are in New England; Franklin gone to France.* . . . The fools have lost the assistance of the knaves. However, should they embrace the enclosed proclamation, they may yet escape the halter."

* This was true, but neither the two Adamses nor Franklin had at that time ceased their exertions in the cause, as the correspondent possibly discovered afterward."

Washington, beset as he was, turned his thoughts toward the mountains as a last refuge for liberty.

"What think you?" he said to Mercer. "If we should retreat to the back parts of Pennsylvania, would the Pennsylvanians support us?"

"If the lower counties give up, the back counties will do the same," said Mercer.

"We must then retire to Augusta County in Virginia," said Washington. "Numbers will repair to us for safety, and we will try a predatory war. If overpowered, we must cross the Alleghanies."

CHAPTER XVII.

CAPTURE OF LEE.—WASHINGTON ON THE DELAWARE.

WE must now turn back to Lee, whom we left at Northcastle, planning an attack upon Rogers. The attempt was a total failure, as the old Indian fighter was quite too much on his guard.

On the 30th of November, Lee had only reached Peekskill, and on that day he wrote to Washington in a tone which possibly he might have modified had he known the history of his letter to Reed.

He excused himself for not having obeyed orders on account of difficulties, which, as he insolently said, he would explain "when both had leisure." His forces had been augmented by the arrival of militia from New England, so that he boasted that by his delay he had served the cause. He should now enter the Jerseys with four thousand "firm and willing men," with whom he should make "a very important diversion."

He asked for instructions, but asked that they might "bind him as little as possible," as he was "persuaded that detached generals could not have too much latitude, unless they are very incompetent indeed." Did we not know how limited were the powers entrusted to Washington, we should wonder at the style in which

Lee, who well knew what military respect demanded, was allowed to address the Commander-in-chief.

Lee counted on no further difficulty in obtaining two thousand men from Heath, though in direct defiance of Washington's orders.

On the evening of the 30th, he visited Heath, and held a conversation with him, reported by Heath himself in his Memoirs. He referred to Heath's refusal to detach his men.

"In point of *law*," said he, "you are right; but in point of *policy* I think you are wrong;" and he added, with his usual self-sufficiency, "I am going into the Jerseys for the salvation of America. I wish to take with me a larger force than I now have, and I request you to order two thousand of your men to march with me."

Heath answered that such a number could not be spared. Lee asked for one thousand. Heath replied that the business might as well be brought to a point at once, and that not a single man should march by his order.

"Then," cried Lee, "I will order them myself."

"That makes a wide difference," replied the other, who had not read "every military treatise in the English language" in vain. "You are my senior, but I have received positive orders from him who is superior to us both, and I will not *myself* break those orders," and he produced Washington's last letter of instruction. Lee looked at it and remarked,

"The Commander-in-chief is now at a distance, and does not know what is necessary here so well as I do."

He asked to see the return book of the division, and running his eye over the columns, he chose out two regiments.

"You will order them to march early to-morrow morning to join me," he said to Major Huntington, Heath's adjutant.

"Issue such orders at your peril, sir," exclaimed Heath to his officer; and then turning to Lee, he addressed him as follows: "Sir, if you come to this post and mean to issue orders here which will break the positive ones I have received, I pray you do it completely yourself, and through your own deputy adjutant-general who is present, and do not draw me or any of my family in as partners in the guilt."

"It is right," said Lee. "Colonel Scammel, do you issue the order."

The Colonel complied, but Heath was not satisfied.

"I have one more request to make, sir," he said, "and that is that you will be pleased to give me a certificate that you exercise command at this post and order from it these regiments."

Lee hesitated to comply. He probably knew that if he were ever called to account for what was a grave offence against military law, such a paper would add much to the evidence against him.

Clinton, however, who was present, said that the request was too reasonable to be refused; and Lee finally gave Heath the required paper, certifying that, as commanding officer at the post, he had ordered the march of Prescott's and Wyllis' regiments.

Heath had done what he could, and he said no more.

Early the next morning the two regiments were moved to the river to embark, when Lee rode up to Heath's door and told him that "on further consideration he had decided not to take the two regiments, and that Heath might order them to return to their former posts.

"This conduct of General Lee," says Heath in his Memoirs, "appears not a little extraordinary, and one is almost at a loss to account for it. He had been a soldier from his youth, had a perfect knowledge of the service in all its branches, but was rather obstinate in his temper."

It was a happy thing for the country that Heath's sense of military duty was also backed up by a rather obstinate temper, as most inexperienced soldiers would have hesitated so stoutly to oppose one who was not only a professional soldier of high reputation, but the popular idol of the time.

It was only on the 4th of December that Lee crossed the Hudson, and began a march through New Jersey so slow and so laggard that it is difficult to account for his course. He knew well the extreme peril of Washington's army, but he showed nothing of that alacrity which had distinguished him in the South. So strange were his proceedings that he has been suspected of treacherous designs; but subsequent events show this suspicion to be unjust.

The truth was, that he was intensely conceited, and longed to signalize himself by some exploit in an independent command.

On the 6th of December, having been reinforced by

fifteen hundred militia from Pennsylvania, Washington went back to Princeton to make a stand at that place, if possible. On the way he received a letter from General Greene, mentioning a report that Lee "was on the heels of the enemy." "I should think, writes Greene, "that he had better keep on the flanks than on the rear. General Lee had better be confined within the lines of some general plan, or else his operations will be independent of yours."

Lee, however, had plans of his own. He was by this time come no farther than Pompton, and pressing as was the emergency, he found time to write to the Governor of Rhode Island to lament the want of military ability in all his contemporaries. "Theory joined to practice, or a heaven-born genius, can alone constitute a general. As to the latter, God Almighty indulges the modern world very rarely with the spectacle; and I do not know, from what I have seen, that he has been more profuse of this ethereal spirit to the Americans than to other nations."

While Lee was delaying his forces at Pompton, for no other purpose, as it seems, than that he might favor the Governor with this eloquence, Cornwallis arrived within two miles of Princeton, and obliged Washington to fall back to the Delaware. Stirling, that he might not be surrounded, retired to Trenton. Boats were collected from all sides, and the men and such stores as were left once more sent back over the wintry river. Washington himself, as usual in a retreat, came over with the rear guard on Sunday, December 7th. He then had the boats destroyed, and troops placed

opposite the fords. He knew that his worn and scanty forces could offer little opposition if the enemy brought boats with them.

Happily, however, it had not occurred to Cornwallis to bring boats with him. The Americans had hardly got over when Cornwallis came down "in all the pomp of war," expecting to find means of transport, and continue his pursuit. For seventy miles up and down the river, however, the boats had been seized, and Cornwallis stood still. Happily, it never occurred to him to send elsewhere for boats. He placed his German troops along the river, stationed his main force at New Brunswick, and placidly waited for the river to freeze over, so that he might cross on the ice. How little could Lord Cornwallis have imagined, as he saw the last of that worn, ragged, forlorn assembly hurrying over the river in retreat before his victorious forces, that the day would come when he and his gallant array should lay down their arms before those very men and their harassed, defeated commander.

Washington, in a letter written on the 8th of December to Congress, entreats them to lose no time in raising forces if they would save Philadelphia. He mentions that, though he has sent expresses to Lee, he has no certain intelligence from that commander. "I am at a loss," he says, "to account for the slowness of his march."

On the 10th of December, Washington again wrote to Lee. In the plainest terms he describes his almost desperate situation. Considering what had passed, it seems singular that he should "request and entreat"

Lee to join him with all possible expedition, instead of bidding him do his duty and obey orders. He tells him that Major Hoops, who had been sent post haste, would give him the route. He urges the danger of Philadelphia. "*Do come on*," he writes; "your arrival may be fortunate, and if it can be effected without delay, may be the means of preserving a city whose loss must prove of the most fatal consequence to the cause of America."

On the next day he wrote again to the same effect, but Lee seems not to have paid the least attention to his wishes.

Such was the danger threatening Philadelphia, that Putnam was sent to put it in a state of defence, and Mifflin to assist him.

On the 11th of December, Congress passed a resolution to the effect that nothing but the last necessity should force them to retire from Philadelphia. This resolution they desired to have published to the army, but Washington thought such action unwise under the circumstances, delayed to publish the resolution, and wrote to Congress to explain his reasons. It was well that he did so, for on the very day after the resolve was passed, Congress very wisely listened to the arguments of Putnam and Mifflin, and broke up, to meet at Baltimore on the 20th.

Washington's whole force was but five thousand five hundred men. He expected, however, to be reinforced by seven regiments under Gates, sent down by Schuyler from the north. With these additions and with Lee's forces he hoped to be able to make a stand.

On the 10th and 11th he again wrote to Lee, urging him once more to hasten his advance. Lee, however, was no farther advanced than Morristown, whence he wrote to the committee which Congress had left in Philadelphia. It was three weeks since he had received Washington's first urgent entreaties to join him as soon as possible. These entreaties had been often repeated, but notwithstanding, he wrote to the committee as follows:

"If I were not taught to think the army with General Washington had been considerably reinforced, I should immediately join him, but *as I am assured he is very strong*, I should imagine we can make a better impression by beating up and harassing their detached parties in the rear, for which purpose a good post at Chatham seems the best calculated. We shall, I expect, annoy, distract, and consequently weaken them in a desultory war."

If such had been Lee's intention, he had had three weeks in which to act; but he had "harassed, weakened and annoyed" no one but his long-suffering and too-patient commander.

On the same day he wrote to Washington an answer to the express message sent by Major Hoops. He takes the tone of an independent leader, and writes to Washington almost as if he were addressing an inferior:

"I am extremely shocked to hear that your force is so inadequate to the necessity of your situation, as I had been taught to think you had been considerably reinforced. Your last letters, proposing a plan of

forced marches and surprises, convinced me that there was no danger of your being obliged to cross the Delaware, in consequence of which I have put myself in a position the most convenient to coöperate with you, by attacking their rear. I cannot persuade myself that Philadelphia is their object at present. It will be difficult, I am afraid, to join you, but cannot I do you more service by attacking them in their rear?"

This remarkable letter from a major-general to a Commander-in-chief was sent by a light horseman, and received an immediate reply.

"Philadelphia," writes Washington, "beyond all question, is the object of the enemy's movements, and nothing less than our utmost exertions will prevent General Howe from possessing it. The force I have is weak, and utterly incompetent to that end. I must therefore entreat you to push on with every possible succor you can bring."

While at Chatham, Lee heard that three of the regiments under Gates, from the northern army, had arrived at Peekskill. He immediately sent orders to Heath to forward them to Morristown.

"I am in hopes to reconquer (if I may so express myself) the Jerseys," he writes; and adds, as though he had accomplished some remarkable feat of arms, "It was really in the hands of the enemy before I came."

On the 11th he wrote to Washington once more from Morristown, saying that his forces would be delayed there two days for want of shoes. Notwithstanding the express directions he had received by

Major Hoops concerning his route, he speaks as if he were at a loss what road to take, and thinks he will make his way to a ferry above Burlington, and wished to have boats sent there to meet him.

Washington, in return, expresses his surprise that Lee, after the instructions he had received, should be in doubt about his line of march. He told him that boats were waiting for him at Tinicum, where they had already been for some days.

"I have so frequently mentioned our situation, and the necessity of your aid, that it is painful for me to add a word on the subject. Congress have directed Philadelphia to be defended to the last extremity. The fatal consequence that may attend its loss are but too obvious to every one. Your arrival may be the means of saving it."

In the meantime, while three of Gates' seven regiments were advancing to Morristown, Gates, with the remaining four, had landed at Esopus, whence he followed a back country road by Delaware and Minisink. On the 11th of December he was overtaken by a heavy snow-storm, in a lonely valley near the Wallpeck, in New Jersey. Cut off from all sources of information, he sent Major Wilkinson, then a young officer of twenty-two, with a letter to Washington, stating his position, and asking what road he should take. Wilkinson crossed the country to Sussex Court-house, and, finding a guide, started down the country in search of Washington's camp. He learned that the Commander-in-chief, with his army, was on the other side of the Delaware, and that as the boats had all been

seized, he could not cross. He discovered, however, that Lee was at Morristown, and to him, as second in command, Major Wilkinson went to ask orders for Gates.

Lee had left Morristown on the 12th, but with that strange want of activity which had marked the late course of the formerly impetuous soldier, he went no farther than Vealtown, only eight miles away. There he left Sullivan with the forces, while he took up his own quarters at Baskingridge, three miles from the main body, at an inn kept by a Mrs. White.

Wilkinson, riding all night, arrived at Baskingridge about four in the morning. He saw General Lee in bed, and gave him Gates' letter to Washington. Lee did not break the seal till he learned from Wilkinson the tenor of the letter. The young major, tired out, took a blanket and lay down by the fire, with the other officers of the suite; "for," he says, "we were not encumbered in those days with beds or blankets."

Lee did not rise till eight o'clock. Then he came down dressed in the slovenly manner for which he was noted, wearing a blanket-coat and slippers; and Wilkinson, who seems to have been particular on the subject of clothes, informs us that his collar was open, and that his linen had to all appearance been worn for some days. He made some inquiries about the northern army, gave the young officer an account of the movements in New Jersey, and made no scruple of condemning them in his ordinary sarcastic fashion.

The remainder of the morning, precious as the hours were, he spent in quarrelling with the militia officers. Among them were certain members of the Connecticut

light horse, whose services, as it seems, had again been proffered and accepted. They had not, however, modernized the fashions which had formerly excited so much amusement, for the observant Major tells us that several of them wore "large, full-buttoned perukes."

These sturdy sons of Connecticut and the arbitrary Lee were not likely to act very harmoniously together, and Lee insulted and swore at them, for no better reason, it seems, than that they wished to know where to find forage, and where to get their horses shod. Colonel Scammel came from Sullivan for orders. Lee, after studying for a few moments a map of the country, said to Scammel, "Tell General Sullivan to move down toward Pluckamin, and that I will soon be with him."

Wilkinson observes that this direction was opposed to the orders he had received to cross the Delaware near Alexandria, and he was convinced that Lee meant to attack the British post at Brunswick. It was past ten when they sat down to breakfast, and afterward Lee wrote a letter to Gates, which, knowing the story as we know it, it is impossible to read without indignation.

He expressed the utmost contempt for Washington, and with surprising forgetfulness of the manner in which he had taken his own course, regardless of all orders, he says: "He (Washington) has thrown me into a situation where I have my choice of difficulties: if I stay in this province, I risk myself and my army, and if I do not stay, the province is lost forever."

The province was not lost forever, even though

Lee's difficulties were speedily resolved in a manner that for some time relieved him of all responsibility in the matter.

While Lee was in the act of writing this letter, Wilkinson, looking out of the window, saw a party of British dragoons turn the corner of a lane leading to the main road, and come up at full charge.

"Here, sir," cried Wilkinson, "are the British cavalry!"

"Where?" asked Lee, who had just signed his letter.

"Around the house!" answered Wilkinson, for the troopers had at once encompassed the little tavern.

"Where are the guard?" asked Lee; and then he swore at the guard, and asked why they did not fire. Then, after a moment's pause, he said to Wilkinson, "Do, sir, see what has become of the guard."

The guards probably thought that they were not bound to be more careful than their general. They had stacked their arms and gone to the south side of the house, on the other side of the road, to enjoy the sun. They were soon dispersed by Colonel Harcourt and the dragoons, who had been led to the spot by a Tory. The women of the house would have had Lee hide himself in a bed, but he would not hear of such a plan.

Wilkinson placed himself in a spot where he could be attacked only by one man at a time. He had a pistol in each hand, and hoped when these should be fired to be able to defend himself with the sword.

In "this unpleasant situation," as he truly calls it, he

"Here, sir," cried Wilkinson, "are the British cavalry." p. 306.

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heard a voice without declare that if the general did not surrender in five minutes the house would be fired. There was a pause, and then the words were repeated, with the addition of a solemn oath. Within the next few minutes some one exclaimed, "Here is the general! He has surrendered."

The British were in too great a hurry to secure their main prize to trouble themselves about such small game as a young brigade major.

Their trumpets sounded the recall to those troopers who were chasing the runaway guards. Lee, bareheaded, and still in his blanket-coat and slippers, was mounted upon Wilkinson's horse, which had been standing at the door, and the dragoons sped away to Brunswick with their captive. Lee's thoughts during that hurried ride must have been wretched indeed.

Wilkinson mounted the first horse he could find, and hurried away to Sullivan, to whom he gave the yet open letter which Lee had written to Gates. Sullivan read it, returned it without comment to Wilkinson, and advised him to rejoin Gates with all speed. Then, as the command was now in his own hands, he put aside Lee's orders, changed his route, and hurried on to join the Commander-in-chief by the road which Lee had been told to follow.

The British were so delighted with the capture of Lee, that they fired their cannon on his arrival in camp. "We have taken," they said, "the American Palladium."

A large party had regarded Lee as the man who was to save the country and the army, in this hour of

its distress, and his loss was thought a great misfortune.

His most ardent friends, however, were at a loss to account for his course in New Jersey, and the extreme carelessness which had led to his capture. He was suspected of collusion with the enemy, but the manner in which he was treated soon dispelled the suspicion. The British affected to regard him as a deserter, as he had once served in their army, and treated him with considerable severity. Lee had taken care to let every one know that Fort Washington had been held against his advice. He had lost, as it seems from all we can learn, no opportunity to detract from Washington's reputation, and enhance his own at the expense of the Commander-in-chief. His letters and his sarcasm had not been without their effect in increasing the then growing discontent against Washington. Wilkinson, who was conversant with what went on behind the scenes in the camp, says:

"In the temper of the times, if General Lee had anticipated General Washington in cutting the cordon of the enemy between New York and the Delaware, the Commander-in-chief would probably have been superseded. In this case, Lee would have succeeded him."

Such a change would have been a far greater misfortune for the country than the loss of New York. Had Lee been one of the world's greatest generals, his irritable temper, his intense egotism, his rude manners, with his habit of insulting every one who differed with him, utterly unfitted him for a position demanding the greatest self-control, patience and temper.

"This is an additional misfortune," writes Washington to Augustine, concerning the capture of Lee, "and the more vexatious as it was by his own folly and imprudence." And in his letter to Congress he expresses nothing but regret for the loss to the service.

Before their adjournment, Congress had passed resolutions ordering that Washington should be possessed of all power "to order and direct all things relative to the department, and to the operation of the war."

He immediately went to work to raise three battalions of artillery, and by offering an increase of twenty-five per cent. upon the pay, and a bounty of ten dollars, he induced those whose terms had expired to remain for six weeks.

"It is no time," he writes, "to stand upon expense, nor in matters of self-evident exigency to refer to Congress at the distance of one hundred and forty miles. It may be thought that I am going out of the line of my duty. A character to lose, an estate to forfeit, the inestimable blessing of liberty at stake, and a life devoted, must be my excuse." The local militia had begun to turn out more freely. The outrages in New Jersey had quickened and roused many of the wavering in Pennsylvania. Colonel Cadwalader came down from Pennsylvania with a fine regiment, and was associated with Reed in keeping watch on the German troops along the river.

On the 20th, arrived Sullivan with Lee's men. These troops were in a more miserable condition than were Washington's own. A great part of them were sent immediately to the hospitals, and the rest were so ex-

hausted that they thought only of going home as soon as their term should expire. On the same day came in General Gates with the remnant of his four regiments. Wilkinson arrived in his company, and resumed his office of brigade major in St. Clair's brigade.

This increase of numbers did not greatly decrease Washington's perplexities, as ten days would disband almost his whole corps, and leave him with only 1400 men, miserably clothed and half fed, and ill provided in every way.

Wilkinson says of the Commander-in-chief, "I saw him in that gloomy period, dined with him, and attentively marked his aspect. Always grave and thoughtful, he appeared at that time pensive and solemn in the extreme."

Washington's situation was enough to account for his gravity and solemnity, but he was probably then meditating the designs which he was soon to execute. General Greene, and with him many other officers, was agreed that now, if ever, was the time when something might be done by a bold stroke; and so early as the 14th of December, Washington was meditating an attack.

The British, in their confidence, had grown careless. Howe was in his winter quarters in New York. Cornwallis, sure that the war would be ended with the almost certain fall of Philadelphia, had wearied waiting for the river to freeze over, and was on the point of embarking for England. The Hessians were stationed along the Delaware, facing the American lines, which were on the west bank.

With the reinforcements he had received, Washington had between five and six thousand men. So far as will, determination, and righteous wrath can make men fit for battle, the troops now with the Commander-in-chief were excellent material. The fearful and faint-hearted had gone back. The dread at first inspired by the Hessians was lost in bitter resentment at their brutality. The people of New Jersey, finding that his Majesty's mercies were, after all, only those of the wicked, began to take up arms, literally, with a vengeance.

In Washington's camp were men to whom British oppression and faithlessness had left nothing but their arms. In many cases the wives and children of these men had suffered outrages which their husbands and fathers must have been less than human not to resent. Even members of the peaceful Society of Friends, who had hitherto looked upon the war with horror, felt the old fighting blood stir in their veins. Taking up such weapons as they could find, they came through the woods and by cross roads to assist, if it might be, in driving the invaders from the soil. Men to whom tyranny has left nothing to lose are the most dangerous of enemies, and among those who gathered in Washington's camp were many who might have said, in the words of the ballad:

"Nor board nor garner own we now,
Nor roof nor latched door,
Nor kind mate bound by holy vow,
To bless a good man's store."*

* These lines are by Joanna Bailey, who was herself a Friend.

In a few days many of the best troops would finish their term of enlistment, and so great were their sufferings, for want of clothes and blankets, that to remain was actually to run the risk of freezing to death.

Washington knew that the Hessian discipline was greatly relaxed, as they held the Americans in too much contempt to guard very carefully against an attack.

Colonel Rahl,* who commanded at Trenton, was much trusted, on account of his success in the New York campaign. According to a journal of one of his own officers, quoted by Irving, the Colonel was deficient in foresight and care. He was fond of parade and bustle, and the Lieutenant of the diary was particularly disgusted at his partiality for martial music, and avers that he kept the officer on guard marching round the church with his men and musicians, "looking like a Catholic procession, and wanting only the cross and banner and chanting choristers." This musical colonel, instead of talking with his staff officers on parade about military duty, discoursed only of sweet sounds. He sat up late at nights, received his officers sitting in his bath, and lay abed till nine o'clock in the morning. According to the Lieutenant, he was a perfect king log. He would not throw up any defensive works, and ridiculed the very idea when it was advanced.

"Works!" he said. "Pooh, pooh!" and added, with a low jest, "Let them come; we'll at them with the

* This officer's name is also written Rall, Ralle, and Rawl.

bayonet." A veteran officer represented that, at all events, the works would do no harm, and the Lieutenant offered to construct them; but Rahl only laughed, whereat the Lieutenant observes, "He believed the name of Rahl more fearful and redoubtable than all the works of Vauban and Cohorn."

It is evident, however, that Rahl had rather more foresight than this German Dalgetty was willing to allow, as on the 21st of December, when there was a rumor that the Americans were about to move, Rahl reconnoitred the river as far as Frankfort, and caused pickets and posts to be placed without the town every night.

Washington knew that whatever he had to do must be done quickly. He learned, from a letter that had fallen into his hands, that the enemy were only waiting for the ice to form to push on to Philadelphia.

He consulted with Gates, wishing him to take the command at Bristol, and from thence assist operations. Gates, however, replied that he was not well, and asked leave to go to Philadelphia. On the eve of a battle on which hung the fate of the army, this was a strange request; but Gates, like Lee, was no friend to Washington. His vanity had been wounded at having been made subordinate to Schuyler in the north; and it was his intention to make interest in Congress for an independent command.

Washington begged that he would at least stop in Bristol and consult with Reed and Cadwalader; but Gates, instead of complying, took quarters at Newtown, and on the 24th of December set out for Baltimore.

Wilkinson accompanied him as far as Philadelphia. Gates, he informs us, seemed much out of spirits, but he criticised severely Washington's course, blamed him for trying to make a stand at the Delaware, and said that he would do better to retire south of the Susquehanna, and there form an army. He said that it was his intention to propose this plan to the Congress at Baltimore; and though Wilkinson had no leave of absence, and his division was on the eve of a battle, Gates urged the young officer to go with him to his journey's end. "My duty," says the Major, "forbade the thought."

The attack on the Hessians was to be made in three divisions.

Washington was to cross the river at McKonkey's Ferry, nine miles above Trenton, and march down upon Rahl.

General Ewing, leading the Pennsylvania militia, was ordered to cross a mile below Trenton, secure the Assunpink, which ran south of the town, and cut off retreat.

Putnam was to take the men then busied under his command in fortifying Philadelphia, join Cadwalader, cross below Burlington, and fall upon the forces under Count Donop.

All the divisions were to cross at night, and be at their posts at five in the morning.

There is little certainty in any plan involving the action of separated forces. Since the departure of Congress, the Tories in Philadelphia had grown bold. A threatened insurrection kept Putnam in the city

with all his force but five hundred, whom he sent into Jersey to act with Cadwalader.

"Christmas night, one hour before day, is the time fixed upon for our attempt upon Trenton," writes the Commander to Reed. "For Heaven's sake keep this to yourself, as the discovery of this may prove fatal to us. Nothing but dire necessity will, nay *must*, justify an attack."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE BATTLE OF TRENTON.

EARLY on the evening of Christmas day the division under Washington, numbering twenty-four hundred men, and twenty small pieces of artillery, were drawn out near McKonkey's Ferry, ready to cross when night should fall, as the plan was to have all the forces on the other side before midnight.

Soon after the troops had started for the ferry, Wilkinson, who had left Gates on his way to Baltimore, returned to camp with a letter from that General to the Commander-in-chief. He found that Washington had already gone down to the river with Greene, Sullivan, Mercer, Stephens and Stirling. Greene, who, though brought up among "Friends," was a born soldier, was full of ardor for battle. It was the opinion of many that his advice had caused the loss at Fort Washington, and it may be that he was anxious to efface the memory of that misfortune.

Wilkinson immediately hurried forward to join the army; and one circumstance that he mentions shows what must have been endured by those who had set out to do battle with Rahl's Hessians. He traced the march for five miles in the new-fallen snow by the

blood from the feet of those whose shoes were broken. Arrived at the ferry, the Major found Washington alone, and just about to mount his horse, and gave him the letter from Gates.

"What a time is this," said Washington, with solemnity, "to hand me letters."

Wilkinson replied that he had been charged to deliver it by General Gates.

"By General Gates!" said Washington. "Where is he?"

"I left him this morning in Philadelphia."

"What was he doing there?" asked Washington, probably surprised, as well he might be, at Gates' disregard of his wishes.

Wilkinson told the truth, unwelcome as he knew it must be. He understood General Gates was on his way to Congress.

"On his way to Congress," repeated Washington, earnestly; and then, as he broke the seal of the letter, Wilkinson made his bow and withdrew to join his brigade, on the bank of the river.

Whatever was the contents of Gates' letter, or whatever indignation Washington felt, he spent no time that night on the matter. Considering what had passed, he could hardly fail to suspect that some of his officers were conspiring against him, and he must have been more than mortal not to be deeply hurt at Gates' desertion of the army in its hour of need. Possibly if any thoughts but those connected with the coming battle filled his mind, they were given to God, to his wife, to his home at Mount Vernon, and to Vir-

ginia Christmas nights passed in far other fashion. What that strong soul suffered in what must have been one of the darkest hours of his life, was known only to God.

In a few minutes he joined Sullivan, Greene, Mercer, and the other generals, on the bank of the river, and the work began.

About sunset the boats began to cross. Colonel Glover, with the Marblehead sailor regiment, was in advance, to guide the others over the darkening stream. But for these men, accustomed to face the sea and wind, the passage would hardly have been possible. The night was dark and stormy, and great masses of ice drifted against the boats, and menaced utter wreck. Colonel Knox, who superintended the passage of the guns, made his far-sounding voice heard over the wind and the rush of the river, as he shouted directions to his men. Washington had crossed over with the first, and waited on the river bank while one precious hour after another slipped away. So difficult was the passage of the river, against a high wind and amid the floating ice,* that it was three o'clock before the artillery was landed, and nearly four before the troops were ready to march. To surprise Trenton, nine miles away, before morning, was clearly impossible. To return undiscovered was out of the question, and if the other divisions had crossed, they might, if left unsupported, be utterly destroyed.

* Among those who were most active in ferrying over the army, the names have been preserved of Uriah Slack, William Greene, and David Laning.

March to Trenton. p. 319.

"I determined to push on, at all events," says Washington.*

The troops marched in two columns. The Commander led the first himself, with Mercer, Stephens, Greene and Stirling, by the upper or Pennington road, entering Trenton on the north. Sullivan, with the other division, went by the river road, leading into the west end of the town. Orders were given to each division to force the outguards, and push directly toward the centre of Trenton.

Notwithstanding the swiftness and secrecy which had marked Washington's preparations, Grant had received notice of the intended attack, and had sent to warn Rahl. The Colonel was accordingly on the alert. Washington's position was more dangerous than he supposed; but one of those special providences which so often occurred to save the American army took place on that night, and turned the balance.

About dusk, just as Washington was preparing to cross the river, an alarm was given from the Trenton outposts. The whole garrison was drawn out under arms, and Rahl himself hastened to the outpost. A body of men had suddenly come out of the woods, fired upon the guard and disappeared.

Rahl made a careful examination of the neighborhood, but found no traces of the enemy. He supposed that this was the attack of which he had been warned,

* Colonel Washington, our Washington's gallant cavalier ancestor, was so well known for his bravery, that it became a proverb in the army, when any difficulty arose, "Away with it, quoth Washington."—*Lloyd, quoted by Chambers.*

and thought that all danger was over. It was a very cold night, and one which the Germans were all accustomed to give to feasting and pleasure. He allowed the troops to go back to their quarters and lay aside their arms.

It was never exactly known who it was that made this fortunate diversion.

Rahl, having, as he conceived, no further cause of alarm, was having a Christmas supper at the house of one Abraham Hunt, a man who dealt with both British and Americans, but who was known to be a Tory. Cards and drinking had been going on all night, and were still in full progress, when just at dawn came a messenger post haste, bearing a note to Rahl, from a Tory who had seen Washington's advance.

The black servant who kept the door said the gentleman could not be disturbed, and refused to let in the messenger. However, he carried the note to Rahl, who put it into his pocket without a glance, and continued his game.

Meanwhile, in snow, and hail, and a wind which drove in their faces, the Americans were on their way.

Day was dawning when Sullivan halted near the entrance of the town, where the roads crossed, and found that many of his muskets were useless with wet.

"What is to be done?" said Sullivan.

"Push on and use bayonets," said St. Clair.

Sullivan, however, sent an officer to ask advice of Washington. The messenger came back somewhat alarmed, for Washington, angered at the delay, when every moment was precious, had, in an unwonted out-

break, indignantly bidden him go back instantly and "tell General Sullivan to advance and charge."

It was nearly eight o'clock when Washington drew near the town. The storm which had caused so much distress on the march had kept every one within doors. The snow had muffled the sound of the soldiers' tramp, and the roll of the artillery wheels. Probably, also, most of the Hessian officers and men had passed Christmas night in the same jolly fashion as their commander, and were now sleeping uncommonly sound.

Washington rode up to a man whom he saw chopping wood by the roadside, and asked him,

"Where is the Hessian picket?"

"I don't know," he answered sullenly.

"You may tell," said Captain Forest, who probably knew the man's politics, "for that is General Washington."

"God bless and prosper you!" cried the man, raising his hands to Heaven. "The picket is in that house, and the sentry stands near that tree."

Captain William Washington and Lieutenant James Monroe, afterwards President, led the vanguard.

Now this picket of Hessians was under command of that very lieutenant who had censured Rahl's want of caution, and it is amusing to find that he was all but caught napping himself. He says that his sentries were not as vigilant as they should have been, and that if he had not happened to step out, they would all have been prisoners before they could lay their hands on their arms.

Thinking, at first, that it was only such an attack as had occurred the night before, the Lieutenant endeavored to make a stand, but seeing the force he had to deal with, he fell back to a company placed to support him, which, however, he found no better prepared than he had been himself.

And now Washington's artillery was unlimbered, and with Washington at its head, the column pressed on, and as they went, the report of firearms from the other end of the town told that Sullivan had charged. His vanguard was headed by Stark, who led on his men with his usual headlong gallantry. The Hessian outposts were driven in, firing ineffectually and wildly from behind the houses as they retreated.

Rahl, startled from his game, hastened out. The Hessian drums were sounding to arms. Everywhere rose the cry, "Der feind! der feind! heraus! heraus!"* The trumpets called over the uproar. A British officer says that so many of the Hessians were away on plundering parties, and so many busied in caring for their plunder, that they could not be collected.† Some maintained a wild and aimless fire from the windows, others rushed hither and thither, not knowing where to go. The dragoons galloped about in disorder. The surprise, the confusion, were complete.

Washington's column advanced to King Street, the artillery at its head, and Washington with the artillery directing the fire. He was entreated to fall back to a safer position, but if he heard, he did not heed.

* The enemy, the enemy! Turn out, turn out!

† Stedman's History of the American War.

The enemy were training two cannon across the street to keep the Americans back, but young Washington and Monroe rushed forward, and took the two pieces just as they were on the point of being fired. Both officers were slightly wounded.

The English light horse and five hundred Hessians, seeing Washington advancing in their front, and hearing Stark and his men charging in their rear, fled rapidly over the bridge across the Assunpink, and reached Donop's encampment in safety. Had Ewing been able to obey orders, he would have cut them off, but the ice had kept him from crossing the river. Rahl, bewildered and probably somewhat confused by his night's entertainment, nevertheless acted the part of a brave soldier.

The Lieutenant, whose record Irving quotes, when he made his way into the town, found Rahl on horseback trying to rally his men.

Learning from the Lieutenant the force of the enemy, and hearing that the place was about to be surrounded, he led his men out of the town into an orchard near by. The Colonel doubtless meant to retreat by the Princeton road, and might have done so, but he felt it intolerable to run away before the despised "ragged regiments." Some one urged what a loss would be their baggage. Rahl suddenly altered his intention of retreating.

"All who are my grenadiers, follow me!" he cried, and rushed back into the town, to the intense vexation of the aforesaid lieutenant.

"What madness was this!" he exclaims. "A town

that was of no use to us, that but ten or fifteen minutes before he had gladly left, filled with three or four thousand of the enemy, and a battery of six cannon planted on the main street, and he to think of retaking it with his six or seven hundred men and their bayonets!"

Rahl was gallantly leading on his men, when, wounded by a musket ball, he fell from his horse. His men, struck with terror, turned to retreat by the Princeton road. Hand's rifles were in their path, the Virginia troops on their left. They stood still, bewildered, and Washington, thinking they had formed in order of battle, ordered Forest to fire canister shot.

"Sir," said Forest, "they have struck!"

"Struck!" replied Washington, as though he would hardly believe that at last he was successful.

"Yes, sir," replied Forest, "their colors are down."

"So they are," said Washington. Putting spurs to his horse, and followed by his command, he rode up to the Hessians, who surrendered at discretion.*

The firing had now ceased everywhere. Major Wilkinson, sent by Sullivan for orders, came up just as the unfortunate Rahl, supported by sergeants, was in the act of giving up his sword.

Washington took Wilkinson's hand. "Major Wilkinson," he said with delight, "This is a glorious day for our country!"

* It speaks much for the men of the army, that, though they had seen these very Hessians butchering their own people while they were asking in vain for quarter, none of the soldiers thought of imitating their brutal example.

Rahl was carried to the house of a friend, where he was kindly attended; but he was mortally wounded, and lived but a few hours. Washington and Greene visited him before leaving Trenton, and treated him with sympathy and consideration, which he seems to have appreciated. He thought of his grenadiers in his last hours, and asked that nothing might be taken from them but their arms. The promise was made and kept. Even the pragmatical Lieutenant seemed to relent toward his leader, and to forgive him his want of caution and his love of music.

"Sleep well, dear commander," he writes. "The Americans will hereafter set up a stone above thy grave with this inscription:

> 'Here lies the Colonel Rahl,
> With him has ended all.'"

The Americans lost but two officers and two privates killed, and two privates who died of the cold on that terrible march.

The loss of the enemy was thirty-six officers and privates, and a thousand men taken prisoners. In addition, the Americans took a thousand stand of arms, six brass field pieces, twelve drums, and four colors. Among the flags was the splendid white silk standard of the Anspachers, which, of all possible devices that could have been chosen, bore an eagle with an olive branch, and the motto "For Prince and for Country"—a legend which, considering that their prince had sold them to a foreign king, to fight in a foreign country—was absurdly inappropriate

CHAPTER XIX.

THE BATTLE OF PRINCETON.

WASHINGTON could not remain at Trenton. Cadwalader, like Ewing, had been baffled by the ice, and Washington had only his twenty-four hundred men to oppose to Count Donop's force, which he supposed to be below, and the British army near at hand. His men were exhausted with their night-march and the battle, and had about a thousand prisoners to guard. Happily for the Americans, the British had a very mistaken idea of their forces, which a Hessian journal puts at fifteen thousand men. Washington therefore resolved to return over the Delaware. The prisoners were conducted to Newtown, under the escort of Colonel Weedon, of whose "kind and friendly" conduct a Hessian officer speaks gratefully. Considering what the conduct of the Hessians had been, they had little right to expect kindness.

At Newtown, our friend the lieutenant, with four other officers, was invited to dine with Washington. He thought that Washington did not look like the great man he was considered, and that "his eyes lacked fire;" but he allows that when he spoke, "his countenance had a smiling expression, which commanded affection and respect." It is quite plain that

the Lieutenant's misfortunes had not diminished his good opinion of himself. He informed Washington that the bad disposition of the Hessian forces was the only reason of their defeat.

Washington asked him if he could have done better, and the Lieutenant was good enough to give his captor a lesson in the art of war, demonstrating clearly that if he had been in command, he "would have come out of the affair with honor." He not only expatiated upon his own merits, but upon the faults of his unhappy commander.

Washington, who must have been much amused by this discourse from the very man he had himself surprised, applauded him highly on the great deeds he would have done if he could, and, with mild irony, complimented him upon his "watchfulness."

The Lieutenant thought Washington "cautious and polite," but says that he talked little, which we can easily credit, as the Hessian, by his own account, seems to have had most of the talk, and considering the tenor of the conversation, "the sly expression" which he detected in the General's countenance is not difficult to understand.

The Hessian prisoners were finally sent to Winchester, in Virginia. Wherever they went, crowds came to look at the terrible Hessians, and were surprised to find that they were much like other men. At first they were insulted and reviled, especially by the old women; but at last Washington had notices posted up everywhere to the effect that the Hessians "had not joined in the war of their own free will, but by com-

pulsion, and that they should be treated as friends rather than enemies."

The notice had its effect, as "people of all ranks in town and country afterward brought them provisions and treated them kindly."

While the battle of Trenton was going on, Colonel Griffin, whom Putnam had sent with five hundred men, made a pretended attack on Count Donop's forces, and succeeded in bringing the whole two thousand men out of their camp, and in leading them as far as Mount Holly, when the Americans disappeared, and the Hessians were left to return as they could.

On the morning of the 26th, Cadwalader heard the firing at Trenton, and anxious as were he and his men to get across the river, the floating ice made it impossible. It was not till noon of the 27th that he could get over, when he had dispatches from Washington telling him of the victory at Trenton, and the subsequent return over the Delaware.

Cadwalader, by the advice of Reed, pushed on to Burlington, to obtain intelligence as to whether the enemy were still at Mount Holly. They found Burlington deserted, and learned that Count Donop, as soon as he heard of the affair at Trenton, had retreated in utter confusion, and that the Burlington troops had gone the evening before.

Reed went on to Bordentown, while Cadwalader halted at Burlington. Reed found that the Hessians had left Bordentown in such a hurry, that their sick were left behind in the hands of those whom they had treated with such cruelty.

Cadwalader and Reed wrote to Washington urging him to recross the river, follow up his victory, and overtake Donop before he joined the forces at Brunswick or Princeton.

Washington was more than ready. He had written to the commanders at Morristown to collect all the militia they could, to harass the flanks and rear of the enemy. Heath was ordered to leave his post in the Highlands, and come on as rapidly as possible by the Hackensack route, until further orders.

Men who would be likely to have influence were sent in all directions through the State to rouse up the people to turn on the enemy.

"If what they have suffered," said Washington, "does not rouse their resentment, they must not possess the feelings of humanity."

On the 29th the troops again began to cross the river. Owing to the ice, the passage was difficult and slow. Colonel Reed was sent on before with two troops of light horse, to attack Donop in the rear, and hold him back till other troops should arrive, and a band of Cadwalader's riflemen were despatched on the same service. The weather was very cold, the roads were bad, the American troops were ill-clothed and ill-shod; but the delight they felt in the sudden reversal of the parts of flight and retreat carried them on. For days these same well-provided mercenaries had followed them along this very road, and had marked every mile of their route by insult, plunder and outrage. Once, to their delight, the riflemen surprised and took prisoners a party of Tories, including several newly-made officers.

While the light horse and the riflemen were thus engaged, Washington was conveying his troops over the half-frozen river.

And now with the end of the year expired the term for which some of the best and most experienced troops had been enlisted. Those regiments which had been used to discipline and to service were indispensable, if the success at Trenton was to be followed up, but they were exhausted by fatigue and the severity of the weather, and anxious for their families at home, many of whom were suffering for the actual necessaries of life.

They were persuaded by Washington to remain six weeks longer, and a bounty of ten dollars was promised them.

The military chest, however, was empty.

Washington sent an express to Robert Morris, of Philadelphia:

"If you could possibly collect but one hundred or one hundred and fifty pounds, it would be of service."

The government credit was not high, and Morris was at a loss how to collect the money. Returning from his office at a late hour, he met a wealthy member of the Society of Friends, to whom he told his perplexities.

"Robert," said the Friend "what security can thee give?"

"My note and my honor," said Morris.

"Thee shall have it," said the other; and early the next morning fifty thousand dollars were sent to Washington. On the same day, the 30th of December, Wash-

ington received, through the Committee of Safety in Philadelphia, a most important resolution passed by Congress. That extreme jealousy of a standing army and of military power by which Washington had been constantly hampered, was driven into the background by more pressing danger.

On the 27th, and before Gates could have laid before them his plan for a new army across the Susquehanna, the representatives of the States passed a resolution which in fact invested Washington with the powers of a Roman dictator. He was authorized, in addition to the forces voted by Congress, to raise sixteen battalions of infantry, three thousand light horse, and artillery and engineers; to establish their pay; to displace and appoint all officers under the rank of brigadier-general; to take what was wanted for the army at a reasonable price, and to arrest and confine disaffected persons. This authority was conferred for a period of six months, unless sooner determined by Congress.

"Happy is it for the country," said the letter of the committee, "that the General of her forces can be entrusted with the most unlimited power, and neither personal security, liberty nor property be in the least endangered thereby."

"Instead of thinking myself freed from all *civil* obligations by this mark of confidence," said Washington, "I shall constantly bear in mind that as the sword was the last resort for the preservation of our liberties, so it ought to be the first thing laid aside when those liberties are firmly established. I shall instantly set

about making the most necessary reforms in the army; but it will not be in my power to make so great a progress as if I had a little leisure time on my hands."

Washington, indeed, had little leisure time. He had himself crossed the river on the 29th, but it took two days longer to convey the soldiers and artillery across the icy stream. Time was thus given to the British to draw their scattered forces together at Princeton. Lord Howe had been waiting quietly in New York to move upon Philadelphia, when the ice should form. When the news from Jersey reached him, his lordship was greatly amazed, "that three old established regiments of a people who made war their profession should lay down their arms to a ragged and undisciplined militia, and that with scarcely any loss on either side."

Lord Cornwallis, who was on the point of going to England, was despatched with haste to resume the command in the Jerseys.

Reed, who seems to have been quite reckless of personal danger, patrolled the country, even to near Princeton, with only six young men of the Philadelphia Light Horse. They tried to obtain news of the enemy's motions from the people, but they had been so harassed and bewildered by the marches to and fro, that nothing certain could be discovered.

Not far from Princeton they saw two or three red coats about a barn and house. Spurring up their horses, and keeping under cover of the barn as they advanced, they surrounded the house unobserved, and twelve British dragoons and an officer surrendered

without a shot. Reed and the six light horse returned in high glee with their prize.

From the prisoners Washington learned that Cornwallis, with fresh troops, had the day before joined General Grant at Princeton. They had now seven or eight thousand men, and were pressing wagons, intending to move upon Trenton. Cadwalader, who was at Crosswicks, seven miles away, sent the same news, which had been brought to him by a young gentleman who had escaped from Princeton. Word was also brought that Howe had landed at Amboy with a thousand light troops, and was on the march.

Washington felt that his situation was critical. The enemy were advancing their pickets closer and closer to Trenton. His force was small—too small to make a stand in a pitched battle, and yet to retreat over the Delaware again, would be to betray the smallness of his force to the British, and discourage the spirit in the country which the late success had awakened. He ordered down Cadwalader and Mifflin, with their three thousand six hundred men. It was with reluctance that he called them into the common danger, for it was staking everything on one throw; but there was no alternative. Mifflin and Cadwalader marched all night and joined him on the 1st of January.

Washington, with his main body, was posted on the east side of the Assunpink. The stream was crossed at its deepest part by a narrow stone bridge, the same over which Rahl's men had escaped. The artillery was planted so as to command this bridge and the fords. The advance guard was stationed about three

miles distant, in a wood with a stream called Shabbakong Creek in front.

On the morning of the 2d came news that Cornwallis and all his force were drawing near. Strong parties were sent out under command of Greene, who engaged the enemy in skirmishes and harassed them as they advanced. By twelve o'clock, however, Cornwallis had reached the Shabbakong and, after halting for a time on its northern bank, they moved swiftly forward. The advance guard was driven out of the woods, and retreated, and the enemy continued their march till they reached the high ground opposite the town. Here they were confronted, as often before, by Hand and his rifles, and were delayed for some time.

All the advance parties retreated, however, as ordered, on the main body across the Assunpink. The bridge was so narrow that the men were greatly crowded in passing, and had some difficulty in getting over. One of the survivors of the battle remembered getting a scratch from Washington's spur as the commander sat on his white horse at the south end of the bridge.

Cornwallis had been so delayed by "the ragged and undisciplined militia," that it was sunset before he entered Trenton.

He formed his troops, and once and again attempted to force the bridge, but was repulsed by a well-directed fire of artillery. Washington, conspicuous on his white horse, kept his position at the south end of the bridge, issuing his orders. The enemy then attempted

the fords, but cannon and the deadly rifle fire drove them back repeatedly.

At every repulse, the Americans raised a loud cheer of triumph. Cornwallis was persuaded from their confidence that their forces were much greater than they seemed, and at last he drew off his men, who rested on their arms and lighted their camp-fires. The Americans also kindled their fires, made of rails from the fences. Sir William Erskine urged Cornwallis to attack that night. His lordship, however, believed that the game was now in his own hands. It was impossible, he thought, that the Americans could escape; but, from what he had seen, he was probably convinced that the "ragged regiments" would be somewhat dangerous when driven to bay. His men were fatigued, and he was willing to give them a night's rest.

"We shall be sure," he said, "to bag the fox in the morning."

The situation was as critical as any in which the American cause had ever been placed. The slender forces of Washington were parted from a greatly superior enemy only by a narrow stream, fordable in many places. Refreshed by a night's rest, and mortified by their repulses of the day before, the British would be driven to exert themselves to the uttermost, and so unequal were the numbers, that success in a pitched battle could, as we have said, hardly be expected. The Delaware, choked with floating ice, was behind, and even could a retreat be effected, it would be almost as fatal to the cause as a defeat. Washington called a council of war at the headquarters of

Mercer, and laid before them a bold expedient. He knew that nearly all the enemy had by this time left Princeton, and were coming on to Trenton by the main road, while their baggage and principal stores were under guard at Brunswick. A new road, known as the Quaker road, because it led to a Friends' meeting-house, ran in the same general direction as the main road, by which the British, under Leslie, were advancing. By a rapid night march, it might be possible to pass Leslie undiscovered, fall upon the forces left at Princeton, capture or destroy the stores, and push on to Brunswick.

The generals present immediately agreed in this plan; but there was one great difficulty. The weather had changed; the mud was deep, and almost impassable. In the course of an hour, however, the wind whirled about to the north, the weather turned cold, and very soon the roads were as hard as iron.

Silently all the baggage was sent to Burlington, and silently all was prepared for a swift march. To deceive the enemy, men were set to dig trenches within hearing of the British sentries, and ordered to keep up their work as noisily as might be until daybreak; others were to go the rounds, relieve the guards, keep up the fires, and preserve the show of a camp. At daybreak they were to march and join their friends.

No doubt these orders were most faithfully carried out, for Cornwallis took no alarm, when at dead of night the army, with its artillery, was drawn out of the camp and began its march. One single traitor might have ruined all.

Mercer led the van, and the main body followed, under Washington. The Quaker road joined the main road about two miles from Princeton, and Washington hoped to reach the junction before day. The Quaker road, however, was a mere track cut through the woods, and the stumps yet remaining broke some of the wheels of the wagons, and delayed the artillery, so that it was almost sunrise, on a clear, cold morning, when Washington reached the bridge at Stony Brook, three miles from Princeton. He drew up his column near the Friends' meeting-house, an old stone building, which we believe is still standing.

Mercer was ordered to lead his brigade along the brook until he reached the main road, where he was to seize the bridge which it crosses, and destroy it, if possible, in order that the British might be met and checked in retreat from Princeton or advance from Trenton.

So far the American movements had been undiscovered.

Three regiments and three troops of light horse, under Lieutenant-Colonel Mawhood, had been quartered that night in Princeton, and were preparing to join Cornwallis. Colonel Mawhood, with the Seventeenth, was already on the march, and had crossed the stream, when, as he was going through the woods, from the top of a hill, he saw the shining of arms, as Mercer and his men were hurrying forward to secure the bridge.

The woods disguised their numbers. Colonel Mawhood concluded instantly that here was some broken

troop of the Americans flying before the victorious arms of Cornwallis.

He faced about, and returned to hold them in check, sending messengers to hasten up the other regiments, that the supposed fugitives might be surrounded.

It was not till he had recrossed the bridge that he saw the van of Mercer's brigade. Both parties hastened to secure a rising ground near the house of a Mr. Clark. The Americans reached it first, and from behind a hedge opened a fierce rifle fire. The enemy returned it, and at the first discharge Mercer's horse was wounded and he dismounted. The British charged with the bayonet. The Americans, who had no bayonets, fell back. Mercer, still on foot, tried to rally them, when he was struck down by the butt end of a musket. The British, supposing him to be Washington, raised a shout of triumph, "The rebel General is taken!"

Several rushed up to him crying, "Call for quarter, you d——d rebel!"

"I am no rebel," retorted Mercer, and though the bayonets were at his breast, more brave than wise, he struck desperately with his sword. He was bayoneted and left for dead. Mawhood followed the Americans to the top of the rising ground, near Clark's house, when he saw a large force—the Pennsylvanians—emerging from the woods. He ceased his pursuit, and, by a discharge of artillery, checked the advance of the militia.

At that moment Washington himself came on the field. He saw at once the extreme danger of the situation. On his white charger he rushed past the ranks of the faltering militia, waving his hat and cheering

them on. Galloping forward under the fire of the British battery, he called upon Mercer's disordered brigade. The men caught their leader's spirit, and rose to the occasion. The wavering lines halted and formed in firm array. At that instant the Eighteenth Virginia came rapidly forward out of the woods, cheering as they came, and a hot fire of grape shot was opened by the artillery from a ridge above. Washington, whose horse and figure were but too well known, was between the guns of friend and foe.

His aid, Colonel Fitzgerald, a young Irish gentleman, deeply attached to Washington, losing sight of him in the dust and smoke, thought his chief had fallen. In despair he dropped the reins on his horse's neck and covered his face.

There was a tremendous rattle of musketry, then an exultant cheer. Fitzgerald looked up. The British were broken and flying, and the smoke clearing away, showed Washington still in the front, waving his hat and leading on his men.

Fitzgerald rushed across the field to nis side.

"Thank God," he cried, "your excellency is safe!" And then the soldier, in his joy and relief, sobbed and cried like a child.

"Away, my dear colonel," cried Washington, "and bring up the troops. The day is our own."*

* It is curious to compare the story of this battle, as told by every one else, with Washington's own account. Its exceeding dryness and briefness and want of animation contrast oddly with the almost reckless gallantry of his conduct. "Happily, we succeeded," is his only expression of triumph.

Colonel Mawhood, a good and gallant officer, had forced his way back, with heavy loss, and was hurrying to join Cornwallis.

The Fifty-fifth British had been met by St. Clair's advance guard, and, after a hot contest, was in full retreat to Brunswick. Of the Fortieth, part fled to Brunswick, and the remainder shut themselves up in Princeton College, which they had used as barracks. Washington brought up his artillery and fired on the building. The first ball passed through a portrait of George II. on the chapel wall.*

Captain Moore, of the Princeton militia, with a few men, burst open the door, and the soldiers surrendered. The British loss was about five hundred in those who were killed, wounded, and taken prisoners. Among the mortally wounded was Captain Leslie, son of the Earl of Levin. Dr. Benjamin Rush, who was on Washington's staff, while a student in Edinburgh, had received much kindness from the earl's family. He took Captain Leslie under his own care; but his skill was useless, and the young gentleman died that same evening. He was buried at Pluckamin next day with the honors of war, and his men shed tears as they stood around his grave.†

The Americans lost Colonel Haslet, a Delaware

* The frame of this portrait is now filled by a picture of Washington, painted by Peale, which was bought by money which Washington gave the college from his private purse to repair the damage done by his guns to the building.

† Dr. Rush erected a simple monument over Captain Leslie's grave as "a mark of esteem for his worth and respect for his family."

officer of high reputation, and, to their great sorrow, General Mercer. He had been left for dead on the field, but was found by his aid, Major Armstrong, and carried to the house of Mr. Clark, where he was kindly attended. He died on the 12th, after Cornwallis had returned to Princeton, but was treated with great kindness by the British Commander. Dr. Rush and his friend Lewis were with him at his death.*

Washington would gladly have returned for Mercer, his old companion in arms, but was assured that he could not bear removal. He was called away by the duties of his command, and set out at the head of a cavalry detachment in pursuit of the British regiments retreating towards Brunswick. He longed to follow up his victory to Brunswick, where was an immense quantity of stores, and the British military chest, worth seventy thousand pounds. The capture of the stores and the money would have completed his victory, and if he had but possessed a few fresh regiments, the work might easily have been done.

As it was, his men were wholly exhausted. All of them had been marching all night, and Mifflin's and Cadwalader's men had had no sleep for forty-eight hours, which had been passed in forced marches and hard fighting. They had had no time to take rest or food, and many of them were without a blanket to

* Mercer was born in Scotland, and was present at the battle of Culloden. He settled at Fredericksburg, Va., and was devoted heart and soul to the American cause. His body rests in Laurel Hill Cemetery, where the St. Andrew's Society of Philadelphia have erected a monument to his memory.

cover them. Before they could reach Brunswick, Cornwallis would be upon them.

A hasty council of war was held on horseback, when they reached Kingston, three miles northeast of Princeton, and it was resolved to give over further attack, and make for Morristown. Morristown was situated in a mountainous country, thickly wooded. The neighborhood not having been as much exposed to the ravages of the enemy as other parts of the State, was able to feed the army, and there were many defiles opening in various directions by which they might advance or retreat.

Washington led his men off to the left, and breaking down the bridges as he went, took the road by Rocky Hill to Pluckamin. The men were so worn out that many of them dropped down to sleep on the frozen ground, and it required all the exertions of their leader to rouse and encourage them to hold out a little longer.

Reaching Pluckamin, he halted for a while, and the worn-out soldiers obtained some rest and refreshment. He, however, could have spent little time in rest, for from Pluckamin, on this same 5th of January, he dates a long letter to Congress; one to Putnam ordering him to advance his troops to Crosswicks, and giving him news of the battle; another letter was sent to Heath, bidding him, instead of advancing, move down and make a demonstration on New York, while Lincoln was to come on to Morristown.

Lord Cornwallis had gone comfortably to bed at Trenton, expecting, as he said, "to bag his fox" in the

morning. Great was his surprise when, at daybreak, it was discovered that though the fires still burned in the American camp, infantry, cavalry, artillery and baggage had vanished as if by magic. He was at a loss to imagine where they had gone. Presently, however, a deep and distant roar was heard which, midwinter as it was, Cornwallis took for thunder.

Erskine, however, who was more on the alert, exclaimed,

"To arms, General! Washington has outgeneralled us! To Princeton!"

Cornwallis instantly divined that the Americans were heading for the stores at Brunswick. Immediately he broke up his camp, and hurried on the march to Princeton. As he came in sight of the bridge at Stony Brook, he saw Major Kelly and his men busy in its destruction. A discharge of round shot drove them away, but the work was done so far as to make the bridge impassable for artillery or cavalry. Major Kelly, heedless of the balls, continued cutting away at the main timbers of the bridge when his men retreated. The ruin fell sooner than he expected, and he was dashed into the stream. His men supposed that he was killed, and hurried away to join their companions. Kelly extricated himself from the water, but, half-drowned and half-frozen, was made prisoner. Cornwallis did not wait to repair the bridge, but pushed his men, breast high, through the deep icy stream, and hastened on.

As he approached Princeton, a thirty-two pound cannon, which had been left behind on a low breast-

work at the entrance of the village, went off with a loud roar. His lordship supposed the Americans to be in full force, directly before him. He sent out horsemen to reconnoitre, while a large detachment cautiously approached the solitary gun. By the time that Cornwallis had discovered the thirty-two pounder to be merely a disconnected fact, a whole hour had passed, and Washington and his men were far on their way.

Cornwallis hurried along the Brunswick road, expecting every moment to see the Americans before him. He reached the town in the evening, and must have been relieved to find that the stores and the treasury were safe, even though he had been so completely outgeneralled.

Cornwallis had broken down several of his baggage wagons in his hurried march, and he left them behind under a guard of two hundred men. Fifteen or twenty of the militia hearing of these wagons, resolved to capture them. Ranging themselves in a semicircle among the trees, they set up a great hurrahing and shouting, and fired rapidly. The British were panic-struck, and with a few of the wagons that were still on wheels, hurried away to Brunswick. The other wagons and their contents fell a prey to the astute militiamen, and, to their great joy, were found full of warm woollen clothing.

Washington wrote once more to General Heath to move down on New York, hoping by that means to withdraw the British from New Jersey.

This expedition, however, though no loss, was a failure. Heath appeared before Fort Independence, and

sent in a most imperative demand for its surrender, assuring the garrison that if an answer was not given in twenty minutes, they must abide the consequences.

No notice was taken of the summons, and Heath's force was not sufficient to allow him to equal his words with deeds. He hovered about the outposts for several days, and then retreated. Washington, though he did not censure Heath in his letter to Congress, could not but say what he thought in a private letter. "Your summons," he observes, "as you did nothing to carry it out, was not only idle, but farcical, and will not fail of turning the laugh exceedingly upon us."

The situations of Washington and Cornwallis were almost reversed; but on the 9th of January the news of Trenton and Princeton had not, of course, reached England, and it is amusing to find Burke writing on that day that "it is evident the Americans cannot look standing armies in the face."

Cornwallis found himself in a most irksome position. The people who had been cheated by his useless "protections," and outraged by his mercenaries, were driven to fury. Parties of militia hung about his outposts, fired on the guards, and harassed every detachment sent out of the camp. So beset were his troops, that he drew them all into Brunswick and Amboy, in order to keep open his communication with New York, whence he now drew nearly all his supplies.

Cornwallis was obliged to humble himself to ask whether money and stores could be sent across the country to the Hessians taken at Trenton, and to the wounded at Princeton a surgeon and medicines.

Washington replied that no part of the regular army under him would interfere with such a party, but added, "I cannot answer for the militia, who are resorting to arms in most parts of the State, and who are exceedingly exasperated at the treatment they have met with from both Hessian and British troops."

The convoy was given a safe conduct, but the Hessian sergeant and the twelve men who went with him were not allowed to bear arms.

The Whigs of the State grew more confident and bold, and the Tories, who were, if possible, still more exasperated at the injuries sustained from their own friends, rose up in arms with the Whigs. Many joined the camp at Morristown, and others carried on a sort of bush-fighting, and skirmished with the enemy wherever they were to be found. The militia often came off conquerors in these volunteer fights, and, growing bolder by success, harassed Cornwallis by day and night.

Those who had been impatient of Washington's caution, who had called him cold, vacillating and undecided, began to see that under all his prudence and reserve there was sufficient fire and enterprise, ready for action at the right moment.

Not only at home, but abroad, Washington's generalship excited surprise and admiration. The little army and its commander were warmly praised by Frederick of Prussia, and in France, where the classic mania was at its height, Washington was named the American Fabius. The title was more fitly applied than were most classical names in those days by the French.

The steady, long-enduring, single-hearted Roman and Washington had many points of resemblance, and they were especially alike in that they were neither too much cast down by ill fortune nor elated by success. Both were singularly indifferent to the praise of men, and strove rather to serve their country than to win popular applause.*

Putnam, with his troops, now advanced from Crosswicks to Princeton. He drew his forage from near Brunswick, to annoy the enemy as much as possible. He kept scouting parties on the lookout continually, and had nothing with him but light baggage, so that if obliged to leave Princeton, he could retreat at a moment's warning, and join the main army at Morristown. In obedience to Washington's orders, he gave out his force to be twice as great as it was. Captain McPherson, a British officer, was at Princeton, dying of a wound. He was anxious to see a friend before he died, and make his will.

Putnam sent a flag to bring the comrade of the unfortunate gentleman, and not to betray the weakness of the American garrison, the officer was brought into town after dark. He saw the college windows all lighted up and the houses in the village illuminated;

* A fragment of the poet Ennius, preserved by Cicero, concerning Fabius, has often been applied to Washington. The lines may be thus freely translated:

"One who by nobly delaying restored to us our republic;
Nor did he place before safety the rumors that flit through the people.
Wherefore now more and more clear shines the fame of the hero."

and to such purpose did Putnam parade and re-parade his little handful of men through the streets and around the houses of Princeton, that the officer when he went back reported that the Americans were certainly five thousand strong. Stations were formed between Princeton and the Highlands, on the Hudson, where Heath commanded. At one of these stations, Somerset Court-house, was General Philemon Dickenson, with the New Jersey militia.

Cornwallis sent out from Brunswick a foraging party of five hundred men. They had with them forty wagons, drawn by large English draught horses. They had collected sheep and cattle all over the country, and were busy on Millstone River plundering a mill where there was a great quantity of flour. General Dickenson's forces were nearly equal in number, but composed of new militia and fifty Philadelphia rifles. He charged through the river waist deep at the head of his men, and so fierce was the onset, that the foragers, though they had three field pieces, fled in confusion, leaving behind them their wagons, their guns, their fine horses, and all their booty.

Washington did not fail to notice these and similar acts of the militia with praise and encouragement. At the same time he was severe in repressing and punishing all excesses and cruelty.

His order of January 21st, 1777, prohibits "the infamous practice of plundering the inhabitants under pretence of their being Tories. It is our business," said the order, "to give protection to the poor, distressed inhabitants—not to multiply and increase their

calamities." The order further declared that any officer or soldier who in future transgressed should be severely punished; and Washington never threatened in vain. Kind-hearted as he was, he was too just and too faithful to his trust to indulge in that false tenderness which puts in jeopardy the lives and fortunes of the innocent only to preserve the guilty, to commit new offences against law and humanity.

The British commissioners had proclaimed amnesty to all who should within a given time take the oath of allegiance. On the 25th of January, Washington issued a counter proclamation. Every one who had signed a declaration of allegiance to Great Britain was directed, within thirty days, to come to headquarters, deliver up the protection papers they had received, and take an oath of allegiance to the United States, as it had, in the words of the proclamation, "become necessary to distinguish between the friends of America and those of Great Britain." All who preferred the interest and protection of Great Britain to the freedom and happiness of their country, had thirty days to withdraw within the enemy's lines, at the end of which time they were to be deemed adherents of Great Britain, and treated as enemies of the United States. Though this proclamation in no way passed the limit of those powers given to Washington by Congress, it occasioned no little dissatisfaction.

Some thought it too bold a measure, others that it was an infringement of State rights, and an indication of the Commander's wish to become a military despot.

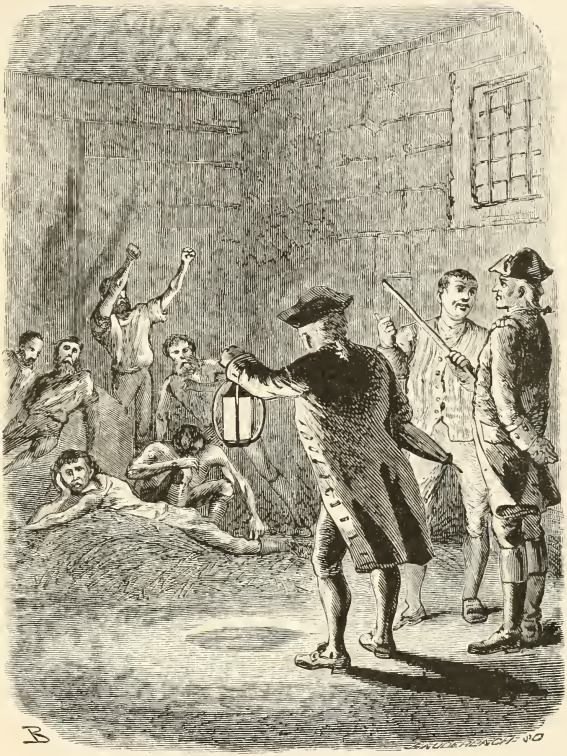
At this time the smallpox, which was then the

scourge of armies, broke out in camp. Vaccination had not then come into use, but inoculation was largely practised. Houses in the town were set apart for those who had been inoculated, and one of the churches for those who took the disease in the natural way. There was great loss and suffering among the latter, and much distress in the town and neighborhood.

Washington was assiduous in visiting the sufferers, stimulating the officers by his example to give their personal attendance.

The position and character of the British and American armies were strongly contrasted. Howe, in excellent quarters in New York, gathered about him a gay circle of Tory ladies and gentlemen. While Washington and his officers were battling with the smallpox at Morristown, and living on the same scant rations as their men, the British generals and their officers, many of them gay young men of rank and fashion, were engaged in a series of balls, fêtes and dinner-parties, enlivened by music, wine and cards. The royalists forgot their troubles, and the "hysterical alarms" they had suffered under Lee. They looked forward to the coming spring, when they expected to witness the entire destruction of the "ragged regiments," the dispersion of Congress, and the trial, conviction, and perhaps execution, of "Mr. Washington," for the Tories seemed to have found an abiding joy in refusing to say "general."

All these things went on while the American prisoners in the hulks and the old sugar-house and the churches were suffering, not only from cold and starva-



The American prisoners. p. 350.

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tion, but from wanton outrage and insult at the hands of the brutal provost marshal.

A sharp correspondence on this matter of the prisoners was exchanged between Howe and Washington, Howe denying point blank the stories about the ill treatment of the Americans.

Howe was a man of honor, and doubtless had no intention of telling a falsehood, but in none of his letters does he say that he has himself entered the prisons or conversed with the prisoners. "I hear," "I learn," "I am satisfied," are the expressions he uses in denial. He probably simply questioned the officials who had charge of the prisons, and received their report. He was an indolent man of luxurious habits, an aristocrat and a professional soldier, and, though not inhuman, was like most indolent people, careless of sufferings which were not close enough under his own eyes to make him uncomfortable.

The abuse of our prisoners has been confirmed by scores of witnesses, and for years empty places in American homes, ruined health, and lingering death, bore but too convincing testimony to the truth of the cruelties of which Washington complained. Colonel Graydon, who was one of the garrison of Fort Washington, and was for some time a prisoner in New York, mentions the insolence of the British officers to whose custody the Americans were committed. "We were again and again taunted as 'cursed rebels,' and assured that we should all be hanged."

"Repeatedly we were paraded, and every now and then one and another of us was challenged among our

officers as *deserters*, affecting thereby to consider their common men good enough for our subaltern officers."*

* Graydon belonged to a smart Philadelphia regiment, and appears to have been quite unable to distinguish between a man and his clothes. As he had been scandalized at the plain dress of the hastily-raised light horse, so he was mortified by a little militia officer from "York," with "dingy clothes, the worse for wear," who, on being asked what was his rank, answered "in a *chuff* and firm tone, "A Keppun, sir." This reply, we are informed, "produced an immoderate laugh among the haughty Britons."

We confess we should be much puzzled, if called to decide on the comparative elegance of "*chuff*" and "*Keppun*." We are glad to learn, for the honor of "York," that the little militia "keppun," in spite of his worn clothes, was "*chuff*" before "the haughty Britons," and we have no doubt that he was equally "chuff" in battle. The trials of captivity were not enough for the unfortunate Colonel Graydon. Even then, his mind "reverts to the mournful past," and pictures the trials his gentility had suffered at the fashions of New England and New York. "In many cases subaltern officers, at least, could hardly be distinguished from their men other than by their cockades. General Putnam could be seen riding about in his shirt sleeves," and, frightful to relate, "Colonel Putnam, his nephew, did not disdain to carry his own piece of meat!"

We learn, also, that the British officers occasionally extended civilities, and gave "genteel entertainments," to certain of the Americans, as they, the British officers, valued their personal gentility too much to seem in any degree deficient in politeness and courtesy when they met with those whom they thought sufficiently polished to appreciate their demeanor." We confess we rather prefer the unpretentious Putnams to those British officers whose gentility was graduated to the clothes and pronunciation of those they met. The gallant Colonel—for such he was in spite of his weakness on the subject of clothes—found some consolation in the fact that the American officers who were on parole greatly surpassed the British in the art of skating.

Howe was a professional soldier, the business of whose life was war. Washington was a soldier, a military leader only at the call of imperative duty. He looked upon war as the last remedy for a nation's distress, preferable only to national dishonor and loss of liberty. He desired, as he said, "nothing so much as to be at home under his own vine and fig tree." And for him the parade of war and the exercise of power had no charms. He cared for his men as for his fellow-countrymen, united to him by love of the common cause.

He did all that could be done for their bodily comfort, and used his utmost endeavors to maintain a high tone of feeling and conduct all through the army. As he sought God's blessing on the cause himself, so he desired his soldiers to look to Heaven for help, and to honor at once their flag and their religion, by uprightness in their walk in life.

"Let vice and immorality be discouraged as much as possible in your brigade," he says in his circular to his brigader generals, "and, as a chaplain is allowed to each regiment, see that the men regularly attend divine worship. Gaming of every kind is expressly forbidden, as being the foundation of evil, and the cause of many a brave and gallant officer's ruin."

We here conclude this record of Washington's earlier life, and of the first years of the war.

We hope that it may interest our readers so far as to lead them to make a further study of their own country's history. Those to whom American traditions

are unknown, who feel no reverence for the memory of her faithful dead, cannot have for her institutions that love which fits men to be citizens of a free country.

If this volume shall give to any American a clearer understanding of Washington's character, a deeper reverence for Washington's name, and, through his example, a closer love for that God whom he served, this book will not have been written in vain.

WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY,
February 22, 1876.

APPENDIX.

BRADDOCK'S DEATH.

THERE is good reason to suppose that Braddock was killed by a shot from his own side. Thomas Fausset confessed to Mr. Day that he did the deed. The two brothers, Joseph and Thomas Fausset, were among the provincial troops, and when the fighting began, they each took a tree, as was the only wise course. Braddock, in a rage, rode up to Joseph, and struck him down with his sword, on which Thomas raised his rifle and shot Braddock through the lungs, partly to avenge his brother and partly, as he declared, "to get the general out of the way, and thus save the remnant of the army." Fausett was a kind of wild man of the woods, and spent most of his time hunting on the mountains. He was a man of gigantic strength and stature, and peaceably disposed at all times. When questioned about the matter, he would sometimes burst into tears, and seem greatly distressed, but always declared that he was justified in killing Braddock, who was sacrificing the whole army to his own obstinacy and ignorance.

Washington himself believed and said that two-thirds of the Americans fell victims to the stupidity of the English regulars, who fired alike at friend and foe. It is no wonder that a wild man like Tom Fausset should have become exasperated at the sight.

WASHINGTON'S RULES.

From the time Washington was thirteen years old, his manuscript school-books have been preserved. He had then completed the study of arithmetic, and these books commence with geometry. All the writing is neat, and the geometrical figures drawn with accuracy. There is one book of an earlier date, containing thirty folio pages, many of which are filled with what he terms "Forms of Writing." They are notes of hand, bills of exchange, land warrants, deeds, wills, &c., carefully written; the most important words, in large and varied characters, in imitation of a clerk's hand. Under the head of "*Rules of Behavior in Company and Conversation*," one hundred and ten are written and numbered. A few will serve to show their general character, and may be useful to the young reader, as proofs of the early diligence of Washington in using every means in his power to polish his manners, cherish kind feelings, impress upon his memory his duties, and incite to continual self-discipline.

SELECTIONS FROM THE RULES.

"In your apparel be modest, and endeavor to accommodate nature rather than to procure admiration; keep to the fashion and habits of your equals, such as are civil and orderly with respect to times and places."

"Play not the peacock, looking everywhere about you to see if you be well decked, if your shoes fit well, if your stockings sit neatly, and clothes handsomely."

"Be not curious to know the affairs of others; neither approach to those that speak in private."

"Come not near the books or writings of any one so as to read them, unless desired, nor give your opinion of

them unasked; also 'ook not nigh when another is writing a letter."

"Read no letters, books, or papers in company, but when there is a necessity for doing so, you must ask leave."

"Associate yourself with men of good quality if you esteem your own reputation; for it is better to be alone than in bad company."

"Every action in company ought to be with some sign of respect to those present."

"Be not forward, but friendly and courteous; the first to salute, hear and answer; and be not pensive when it is a time to converse."

"Think before you speak, pronounce not imperfectly, nor bring out your words too hastily, but orderly and distinctly."

"Strive not with your superiors in argument, but always submit your judgment to others with modesty."

"When another speaks, be attentive yourself, and disturb not the audience."

"Let your conversation be without malice or envy, for it is a sign of a tractable and commendable nature; and in all causes of passion admit reason to govern."

"In dispute, be not so desirous to overcome as not to give liberty to each one to deliver his opinion; and submit to the judgment of the major part, especially if they are judges of the dispute."

"Speak not injurious words, neither in jest nor earnest; scoff at none, although they give occasion."

"Be not hasty to believe flying reports to the disparagement of any."

"Be not apt to relate news if you know not the truth thereof. In discoursing of things you have heard, name not your author always. A secret, discover not.

"Speak not evil of the absent, for it is unjust."

"Detract not from others, neither be excessive in commending."

"Use no reproachful language against any one, neither curse nor revile."

"Mock not, nor jest at anything of importance."

"When you deliver a matter, do it without passion, and with discretion, however mean the person be you do it to."

"Show not yourself glad at the misfortune of another, though he were your enemy."

"When a man does all he can, though it succeeds not well, blame not him that did it."

"Wherein you reprove another be unblamable yourself; for example is more prevalent than precept."

"Being to advise or reprehend any one, consider whether it ought to be in public or in private; presently, or at some other time; in what terms to do it; and in reproving, show no signs of choler, but do it with sweetness and mildness."

"Take all admonitions thankfully, in what time or place soever given; but afterwards, not being culpable, take a time or place convenient to let him know it that gave them."

"Undertake not what you cannot perform, but be careful to keep your promise."

"Honor and obey your natural parents, although they be poor."

"When you speak of God, or His attributes, let it be seriously in reverence."

"Sublime matters treat seriously."

"Let your recreations be manful, not sinful."

"*Labor to keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire called conscience.*"

Washington vigilantly obeyed this last counsel, and endeavored "to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men." Self-discipline, thus early commenced and unweariedly persevered in, enabled him to control his naturally strong temper and check his ardent feelings. And the mildness and propriety of his manners, the firm correctness with which he spoke and acted on all occasions, evinced that he was influenced through life by the code of rules formed in his boyhood; and when a young fatherless nephew was under his care, in a letter of advice to him he said, "Your future character and reputation will depend very much, if not entirely, upon the habits and manners which you contract in the present period of your life. You should therefore be extremely cautious how you put yourself into the way of imbibing those customs which may tend to corrupt your manners or vitiate your heart."

Excellent as was his code of maxims, the book which contains it shows that it was not the highest source from which the youthful writer sought aid to form a virtuous character; for there also are transcribed selections of religious poetry; one of which, written on Christmas day, commences thus:

> "Assist me, muse divine, to sing the morn
> On which the Saviour of mankind was born."

The pious feelings which prompted the boy of thirteen to employ his pen with this holy theme, induced him in early manhood, when, under the English government, he commanded a portion of the army, to apply earnestly for chaplains to perform divine service regularly, and in his orders to desire the officers "to punish severely any man whom they should hear swear, or make use of an oath." And when he was at the head of the American army, influenced by the same feelings, in giving orders to the

commanding officers of each regiment to procure chaplains, he directed that they should see that all inferior officers and soldiers should pay them suitable respect; and added, "The blessing and protection of Heaven are at all times necessary, but especially so in times of public distress and danger. The General hopes and trusts that every officer and man will live and act as becomes a Christian soldier, defending the dearest rights and liberties of his country." After expressing sorrow that the "foolish and wicked practice of profane cursing and swearing" had become common, and the hope that the officers would, by their example as well as influence, check it, he said, "And that both they and the men will reflect that we can have little hope of the blessing of Heaven on our arms if we insult it by our impiety and folly. Added to this, it is a vice so mean and low, without any temptation, that every man of sense and character detests and despises it."